

February 2012

READING & DISTRICT TABLE TENNIS ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

Editor: DEREK WAVELL

Most photos and videos in here are by
Didier Garçon - superb work, Didier!

Bell for the Last Lap

The 2011-12 season is poised for its grand finale - see last-minute briefings in **divisional reports**.

But other races are just starting, and the scenery itself is in motion. A giant in our land, **Alan Dines**, has passed away (see picture above, and **tribute on P3**). Our Reading TT community has rested on the shoulders of a few giants for many years - Alan Dines, **John Cunningham** who died in 2009; **Nigel Maltby**, who is now is passing on some of the many roles he has created; **Mark Banks** - if you're a lover of his unique Div 1 reports, look now, because there may not be many more of them. And we know our players are growing older and team numbers are dwindling - see the **Letters section**.



The good news is the way a **vigorous team** took over from John C at OLOP, and **coaching is thriving** too even without Alan. Nigel has found **new takers** for his jobs (NB - some jobs are still available and they'd **look good on your CV!** Contact him if interested). Our **juniors are thriving** as hardly ever before. As for dwindling numbers - we can do something about that, as Duncan Abbott urges on the Letters page. Recent arrivals in the UK are already giving us a shot in the arm.

Finally **if you like a laugh and have a strong stomach**, I wonder if you saw the priceless TT spoof movie "**Balls of Fury**" the other day on TV? If not, catch up on the best sequences on [YouTube](#)

Good luck to all -

Derek

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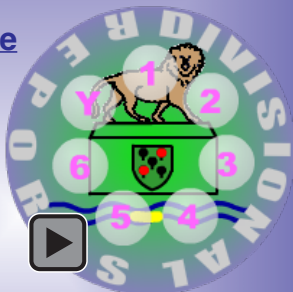
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UPDATE ON THE READING TABLE TENNIS CENTRE

by Peter Bradley

As many of you are aware we started this venture during the last quarter of 2008. The draft plans were ready by the end of that year and Alan Dines started the process of a pre-planning application to the Reading Borough Council (RBC) Planning Office. Since that time there have been many occasions when, with constant reminders, we thought that progress towards outline planning permission was being made only to be thwarted by repetition of previous correspondence.

In August 2011, when once again we had been rebuffed, a strong letter was sent to the RBC Planning Department detailing the history to date on the lack of progress. This seemed at last to strike home and some positive meetings have now taken place between RTTC, RBC staff and the Planning Department. We are currently awaiting a report from them on the legal, leasing and position of the building on the chosen site. Hopefully we can then submit an outline planning application.

The RTTC committee lost a truly valuable team member when Alan Dines sadly passed away in January. Alan was the driving force in getting the building designed and was constantly chasing the dream of an all-inclusive centre for Reading. It is the intention of the steering committee to

continue this drive in memory of our good friend. We pass on our condolences to his family.

Nick Heaps has come on board and will replace Alan as a Trustee of RTTC Ltd. He has agreed to act as the Publicity Officer and will be keeping you all informed via the RTTC website to which the latest bulletin has been added, (see <http://www.readingtabletenniscentre.co.uk/>).

RTTC will be asking the ETTA to, once again, include this project in their request for Facility Funding in their next submission to Sport England. We were included in their last submission but those funds have been utilised elsewhere due to our lack of outline planning permission.

As always the committee is looking for assistance from other volunteers as we need to replace Alan with someone capable of dealing with the building design and Colin would like help with someone taking minutes of meetings so that he can concentrate on the Business Plan. Other volunteers who would just like to come along to the odd meeting to ask questions or establish whether there was anything they could help with would also be welcomed. We look forward to hearing from you.

Peter Bradley – RTTC Chairman

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



DWINDLING NUMBERS - AM I DOING MY BIT?

I'm sure I'm not the only one who has noticed the decline in the number of teams and players in the league in recent years. Admittedly the decline has not been as fast as I thought it might have been, but nevertheless enough for me to ask the question – will there be five or six divisions next season?

Two years ago there was talk of the number of league teams increasing to 69, but that number became 64. This year that number has reduced to 62 thanks in part to the withdrawal of two clubs. A similar reduction this summer will see the total number of league teams down to 60. With many players unhappy at the gaps in playing due to most divisions missing two teams, it is almost inevitable in my opinion that Division 6 will be removed, leaving 5 divisions of 12 teams each.

Many people have different theories as to why this has happened, like the apparent fading popularity of the game, or the rising average age of players. I must admit the latter has some credibility. Despite being in my early fifties I quite often face teams where all three opponents are a fair bit older than me! However I still feel there is something we can all do to redress the balance.

I have enormous respect for players who have been part of the same team for several years, as this gives the league

a lot of stability. However we also need newcomers, and by that I don't just mean youngsters but players of all ages.

At Birch Copse we have three teams and a total of 13 regular players. Of those 13 players five of them made their league debuts this season, all of them being adult players. Also out of those 13 players only Roy Hull and myself were playing league table tennis ten years ago. So if we had in that time not made any attempt to encourage people to play league table tennis we would not have any league teams at our club!

Encouraging new players is not always easy. During that time some new players at our club have dropped out because league table tennis has not been to their liking or they have moved away. Nevertheless our policy of encouraging and recruiting new players has made a big difference.

I personally have come across a number of people who enjoy playing table tennis but have either not thought of or not been encouraged to play in the league. So let's all do what we can to encourage new players and therefore stem or even reverse the current trend of declining players and teams.

The future of table tennis is in our hands.

Duncan Abbott



ALAN DINES: A TRIBUTE

After several months of ill health, Alan Dines sadly passed away at the Royal Berkshire Hospital on the morning of 6 January 2012 at the age of 79. He will be greatly missed by his family and friends and by the table tennis fraternity in Reading and beyond.

Hailing originally from Hounslow and an architect by trade, Alan spent the majority of his spare time playing and coaching table tennis. In his playing days he was formidable - winning among other accolades, the Reading Individual Handicap as far back as 1967-68, a competition he always held dear, later donating a very large trophy in honour of his own son Nicky who tragically died in his late teens.

In the 41 years that he ran the Institute of Match Play and Coaching Technics (IMPACT) he introduced thousands of children to the sport he loved, with a high proportion of them going on to play competitively, some to great aplomb and none more so than current ETTA Southern Regional Coach, Alison Gordon, who went on to become four times national ladies champion and compete for Team GB at the Barcelona Olympics.

When Alan teamed up with the late John Cunningham, who founded and ran the Our Lady of Peace (OLOP) Table Tennis Club for 30 years, it was a match made in table tennis heaven. The two were a formidable force for good in the game, both locally and nationally through the numerous OLOP IMPACT teams. Many fine players were produced through their joint endeavour, with a lot of them going on to win local, county and national honours and some international representation. Just last month Alan was overjoyed to hear that one of his young protégés had been invited to represent England at the World Schools Championships in Italy this spring.

Outside of his work with the OLOP Club, Alan did much to assist in youth development including recently managing the John Cunningham Youth League for several successful years. He also worked tirelessly running after-school sessions at many local schools including St Dominic Savio, Waingels College, Nine Mile Ride and Sonning Common Primary. At

Sonning Common TTC, Alan had been coaching juniors at weekly sessions until relatively recently. This commitment has significantly bolstered the number of kids playing the sport in the area which certainly bodes well for the future.

Alan was very loyal to the young players he guided and always encouraged them to give of their best at all times, building an inner confidence with particular emphasis on expressing themselves competitively and living the IMPACT strap line 'expecting more than others think possible'. He gave of his time liberally and without favour or financial inducement and his knowledgeable insight into the game through the huge experience he had accumulated was a key ingredient in the success of his players.

Alan's excellent record of introducing and coaching young players was recognised by the English Table Tennis Association in 2009 when he was awarded a prestigious lifetime coaching honour.

As a volunteer, Alan also served with much credit on the Reading & District TTA Committee as Development Officer and until this season was the OLOP TTC Chairman. He was also heavily involved in the Reading Table Tennis Centre Project, having drawn up the architectural plans and been instrumental during the planning process. Alan also served on several non table tennis committees such as Readibus as part of his selfless service to the wider community. His fellow Committee members will miss him for his intellect and drive.

What defined Alan more than anything else was his relentless passion, much like that of his great friend John Cunningham. Although occasionally this manifested itself in conflict with others, it was overwhelmingly a force for good. Such is the stature of his achievements that his legacy will last for many generations to come - a Dines Dynasty.

We certainly all have a lot to thank Alan for and it has been our good fortune and privilege to have known and worked with him for so long. He will be remembered in our thoughts always.

Adam McTiernan

THE READING CLOSED

by Nigel Maltby



TOURNAMENT REFEREE PAUL JARVIS

The Senior events of the Reading Closed Championships were held over the weekend of the 11/12th February at the Kingfisher Club, Woodley.

Daniel Moses retained his **Men's Singles** title by beating Hari Gehlot in the final. A very tight opening game ended when a terrific angled forehand drive proved too much for Hari's block and Hari then served into the net to gift Daniel the game 11-8. In the next a bright start from Hari saw him open up a 5-1 advantage. Daniel though, as he can so easily it seems, pulled it back to 5-5. Hari looked to be lacking self belief with Daniel stepping back

NB - you can play back most of these finals in this Newsletter, just by clicking on green links.

from the table playing relaxed, smooth backhand and forehand top spins with Hari close up to the table playing a counteracting blocking game. Hari seized back the initiative near the end to level the match at one game all 11-8.

In the third game Daniel started best, quickly opening up an 8-4 lead, before again relaxing to allow Hari to close slightly at 10-7. Daniel's excellent serve, though, clinched that game 11-7. The start of the fourth game saw Daniel playing a series of unbelievable shots. One simply stunning backhand return of a Hari forehand smash left his opponent dazed and 3-0 down and that quickly became 5-0 with Daniel truly in the zone. However again Daniel relaxed just that bit too much and a terrific wrong-footing backhand from Hari saw him close to within two points and he was level at 6-all.

Hari went on to win the next two points as well to lead 8-6 before Daniel recovered to 8-all. Hari looked to have the game in his grasp as he led 10-8 but one good service and a return from Hari that clipped the top of the net before sailing high for Daniel to put away left them level at 10-all. Daniel seized his chance by winning the next two points for an 11-8 8-11 11-7 12-10 victory.



MIXED DOUBLES: HARI GEHLOT & SHARON MITCHELL v WENDY PORTER

In the early rounds Daniel Moses overcome Ian Cole 14-12 9-11 11-9 11-6, Hanson Xu managed a fine 11-9 5-11 11-7 11-8 win against Colin Dyke and Hari Gehlot needed four games to see off Daniel West 9-11 11-2 11-5 11-5. Daniel Moses won an entertaining quarter final against Paul Treadgold 11-4 13-11 8-11 11-8, Hanson Xu won a great match with Danny Ricks 6-11 11-9 11-9 6-11 11-9 while Elson Costa and Hari Gehlot both progressed with wins over Steve Ricks and Jeremy Willis.



PU ZHANG v MALCOLM GREGORY

In the semi-finals Daniel Moses beat Hanson Xu 13-11 11-8 11-6, while Hari Gehlot had a surprisingly easy victory against Elson Costa 11-4 11-6 11-3.

The **Ladies Singles** title went to Wendy Porter after she beat newcomer Ka Lu Chiu 11-4 11-9 11-8 in a good final. Too many simple errors from Ka Lu early on saw Wendy win the first game. Gradually Division 6 player Ka Lu became more confident against her Division 2 opponent and from 3-5 down in the next she fought her way into a 7-5 lead. Wendy held her nerve to level at 8-all with a backhand smash and a

terrific forehand from Ka Lu saw her level at 9-all, before the best point of the match gave Wendy a 10-9 advantage before going on to win 11-9.

The third game was a similar story with Ka Lu playing some good shots but Wendy's experience and powerful forehand keeping her in front. A fine forehand down the side of the table finally clinched Wendy the title 11-4 11-9 11-8.

In the **Men's Doubles** scratch pairing Paul Jarvis and Ian Cole reached the final after beating Steve Ricks and Andy Stephens in their semi 11-7 11-9 11-7. Daniel Moses and Chris West beat Hari Gehlot and Dan West in their semi 11-6 11-6 11-6. In the final Paul and Ian started well and took the first game 11-5. Daniel played some incredible shots after that and with his partner Chris playing a good steady game they went on to win the next two games 11-7 11-7. Paul and Ian were far from finished with both players hitting some fine shots, however it was Daniel and Chris who won through in the end 5-11 11-7 11-7 11-9.



STRATEGY CONFERENCE: KA LO CHIU AND IAN COLE



MORE STRATEGY: DANIEL MOSES & WENDY PORTER

In the **Mixed Doubles** Hari Gehlot and Sharon Mitchell recovered from losing the first game 7-11 to beat Daniel Moses and Wendy Porter 7-11 11-6 14-12 11-8. The third game proved crucial with Wendy and Daniel recovering from 5-1 down to level at 8-all and in a tense finish Daniel's usually reliable forehand clipped the top of the net and went off the end of the table to give Hari and Sharon a 2-1 lead.

In the Over 60's event Colin Dyke retained his title by beating Sharon Mitchell 11-4 11-7 11-6 in the final. The Senior Veterans title went to Malcolm Gregory after he beat shock finalist Pu Zhang 11-5 13-11 10-12 11-3 after Pu had beaten favourite Colin Dyke in his semi final 11-8 12-10 11-9. The Veterans event saw a major surprise as Ian Cole managed an excellent 12-10 11-7 10-12 6-11 11-7 victory over Hari Gehlot.

Ian Cole won the Division 1 restricted singles, beating both Nigel Maltby and Colin Dyke. Colin finished runner up after beating Nigel 11-5 11-7 11-5. Paul Treadgold was on top form to beat Wendy Porter in the Division 2 singles 12-14 13-11 12-10 7-11 12-10 but finally succumbed to Hanson Xu in his semi-final 7-11 11-5 11-8 1-11 4-11. Jeremy Willis beat Steve Purchase 11-8 11-6 9-11 11-7 in his semi final and it was Jeremy who took the title after an unlikely come back from two games down and 9-5 down in the fifth to beat Hanson 10-12 6-11 11-5 11-4 11-9.

There was a terrific final in the Division 3 event with both Dan West and Danny Ricks playing some superb table tennis. Dan West can count himself a little unlucky as Danny Ricks won it 12-10 16-14 14-12. The Division 6 event also saw a nail biting final with Ka Lu Chiu beating Joshua Gallen 11-6 10-12 11-1 5-11 11-7.



MIKE DORRINGTON v NIGEL ROWLAND

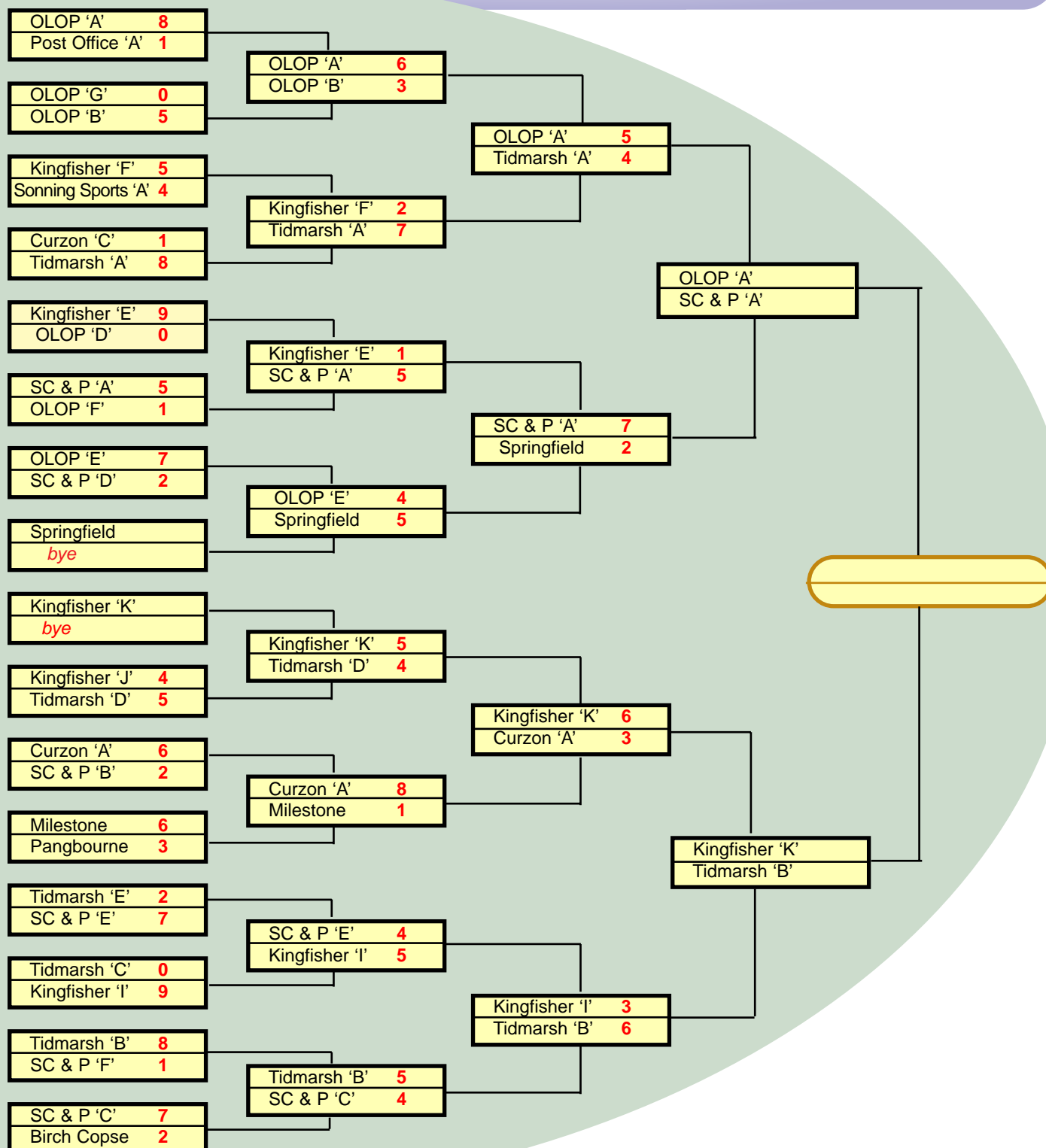
Team Handicap Competition 2011-12

organised by Duncan Abbott

w/c 24 Oct 2011
Round 1

w/c 21 Nov 2011
Round 2

The semi-finals are due to be played at Kingfisher club on **Friday 30th March 2012**. They are between Division 1 leaders OLOP 'A' and current Team Handicap trophy holders Sonning Common & Peppard 'A'; and between Division 5 leaders Kingfisher 'K' and Division 2 side Tidmarsh 'B'.



READING INDIVIDUAL HANDICAP TOURNAMENT

by Nigel Maltby

As Reading table tennis mourned the loss of Our Lady of Peace stalwart Alan Dines, the popular Reading Individual Handicap tournament took place on Sunday 8th January with the trophy donated by Alan in memory of his son Nick at stake.

Perhaps fittingly it was an Our Lady of Peace player who won, with Daniel Moses showing his usual calm and abundant talent to win through to a final against Milestone's John Evans, in which Daniel won a highly entertaining final 18-21 22-20 21-18.

In the earlier group stage Julian Telford won Group 1, recovering to beat Tim Raby (+4) and then clinching top spot by beating Danny Ricks (+5). Danny had earlier made sure of the second qualifying place by beating Tim. In Group 2 Sam Ricks beat both Diane Taylor and John Evans to finish top while John was runner up after beating Diane (+2) in a lengthy battle.

Norman Swift showed all his class to defeat both Nigel Maltby and Steve Ricks to win Group 3, Nigel finishing runner up. Roger Woolven-Allen won Group 4, defeating Jim McClure (+8) and Steve Purchase from scratch. Steve just edged out Jim for second place.

Youngster Siad Cole finished top of Group 5, ahead of Malcolm Gregory after both players managed wins over Ian Ayres, Jon Willis won a tough Group 6 after holding off young Joshua Gallen (+8), Josh finished second after a good win over Derek Wavell. In Group 7 Ian Cole needed all his experience to hold off Melanie Griffiths (+14) and Jeremy Willis (+6) with Jeremy qualifying as runner up after comfortably beating Melanie. Finally Daniel Moses won through from Group 8 with Denise Weller also making it through after beating Paul Treadgold (+2).

In the last 16 John Evans (+7) beat Julian Telford, Siad Cole (+1) won a tense battle with rival junior Joshua Gallen while Denise Weller (+7) just held off the challenge of Ian Cole. Norman Swift won a good match with club mate Steve Purchase (+5), Nigel Maltby won through against Roger Woolven-Allen from scratch while Daniel Moses made light of his 11 point deficit against Jeremy Willis to win.

Malcolm Gregory won an all-Division-2 battle with Jon Willis (+1) while Sam Ricks was up against his brother Danny from scratch, Sam just winning through.

In the Quarter finals John Evans had just too much for young Siad Cole (+4) to win, Norman Swift saw off a determined challenge from Denise Weller (+6) while Daniel Moses had too much in the end for Nigel Maltby (+11) to win. Sam Ricks (+4) also breezed through to the semi finals after he defeated Malcolm Gregory.

In the semi-finals Daniel Moses needed all his concentration to win the first against Sam Ricks (+12) 21-18. Sam excelled right from the start in the next game, holding

almost all of his starting 12 point cushion to go 20-11 ahead. A snatched backhand and a missed smash from Sam however saw Daniel close to 20-15 and as nerves started to gather Daniel closed even further to 20-18. However a good serve from Sam clinched the game 21-18.

In the decider Sam continued to block Daniel's attacking shots very effectively as he continued to pick up the odd point to lead 14-5. Daniel rallied to close to 15-10, when two quick cheap points for Sam looked to have given him a great chance at 17-10 ahead. Daniel however rallied again and some amazing play, mixed with some good fortune saw him level at 17-all. One final good serve from Daniel ended Sam's challenge 21-18.

In the other semi final John Evans had a 9 point start against Norman Swift. Great play from Norman saw him quickly level at 13-all before going on to win the first 21-16. At 9-4 ahead in the next John incredibly won the next seven points in a row to leave him 16-4 ahead. Norman finally ended that terrible run but it was too late to save the game as John clinched it 21-11.

In the decider an excellent start from Norman saw him take the first six points to leave him 9-6 behind. Norman was constantly trying to get in with his attack against John's awkward blocking style. John managed to hold on to his lead to 14-10 and then actually increased it to 18-12 as the pressure mounted on Norman. With some good fortune near the end it was John who held on to win 21-16.

In the final John Evans had a 13 point head start against Daniel Moses and he just held on to a lead with his incredible blocks against Daniel's highly spun topspins to still lead 20-18. A good serve from John saw him win the first 21-18. In the next Daniel looked more than troubled at 16-6 down. He noticeably slowed his game down, happy to push and wait for errors from John and the tactic worked as he clawed back to level at 17-all. John wasn't finished though and he was still in it at 19-all and then 20-all, before he was finally undone by a stylish forehand from Daniel.

In the deciding game Daniel again found himself 16-6 behind. After John missed what looked an easy forehand kill Daniel found himself only 16-13 behind and he was level again at 17-all. This time John couldn't leave with him and Daniel was able to relax slightly as he clinched the game 21-18 to become the Individual Handicap winner for the first time.

The trophy was presented by Reading Chairman Nigel Maltby, who also thanked tournament organiser Duncan Abbott and his assistant on the day Paul Jarvis.



TABLE TENNIS VIDEOS

YouTube for *PDF*

Streaming live from the Internet

When this player activates you will be asked to allow a number of connections to the YouTube servers

No personal data is sent



Select a new video to launch



LAUNCH IT

How to Play Videos

1. As soon as you arrive on this page, a video will be called up automatically from YouTube, and you just have to wait for it to play on the screen.
2. If you clicked on a link on another page, you will get whichever match you asked for. Otherwise you'll get the default - which is the men's singles final: Daniel Moses v Hari Gehlot.
3. You might have to click **OK** a few times before it runs. You are agreeing to receive this material as safe (which it is).
4. There is a normal set of controls at the bottom of the player - you can start and stop the video, jump forward or backwards, change the sound volume or quality of reproduction.
5. If you are viewing the Newsletter in your browser, videos can be slow and patchy in performance at peak times. Simply download the newsletter to your hard disk and then double click on its icon - and you should experience a great improvement. (The Newsletter takes up under 1 MB of disk space, which is very little by today's standards).
6. Rather than scatter different videos on different pages, I have given you a choice to watch in this one place. Simply use the pop-up menu labelled "**Select a New Video to Launch**", and choose one of the videos that are currently available. Then click "**LAUNCH IT**".
7. On the list at present are four of the finals from the Reading Closed, plus two international matches featuring Timo Boll - also an interesting exhibition match between Matthew Syed and Liam McTiernan, from back in 2010.
8. **Warning:** the pop-up menu needs space in which to drop down, and it can't do so if you have the video too big at the time. Actually, as soon as you start to operate the pop-up menu, the page view will automatically widen out, to give room for the menu to drop down. And clicking "LAUNCH IT" should automatically enlarge the video again to cover most of your screen.
9. But if these don't work, you can use the size control of the PDF to change the size of the video. As usual, a bigger or higher resolution picture makes the action more jerky. You will have to choose what is the best for your own computer's processor speed.

DIVISION ONE by Mark Banks

Hi guys. A rather sad edition of the D1 write up this time around as the cuddly one has left us for the (much) warmer shores of Dubai for what is going to be a long year. Great for him of course but not so great for me as I haven't seen him to get any funny stories or take the mick. Gutted. Big

Bad Bob Davis too. His move is more permanent and is now residing somewhere in Devon and last of all me. Yep, bet you didn't see that one coming. The house is on the market and if we get the price we want, I too will be moving away from the Reading area with Dorset the location of choice. Will probably still play in Reading on occasions if I can but will be too far away from the action to do this and the scores I'm afraid and I'm not going out on a high either as I'm

late with my submission so this will be rather rushed and rather short. DBW will not be pleased but hey I'll be out of his hair soon. *[You great lummo- that's the last thing I want! - Ed]* I'll keep you posted on progress of course but in the meantime here's the action/controversy and somewhere in between some great play.

Love & Peace

Mark x

Not quite sure which is more remarkable for **OLOP 'A'**. Daniel Moses losing his 100% average to yours truly or Daniel Moses finally getting a job? Both are equal in amazingness I guess. Still proudly sitting at the top of the league where they've been all season then but were wounded somewhat by our decision to bring a little bit of help from our friends when the rest of Kingfisher 'A' were taking a midseason break. Whatever your thoughts about ringers (and I've had positive and not so positive comments hurled at me) it dawned on me when does a ringer stop becoming a ringer? Say Rich plays 5 or 6 matches is he still a ringer then? Interesting isn't it. Anyway, OLOP 'A' are still in the box seat and all in great form. Norman's had a couple of

LEADING AVERAGES

Player	Team	PL	W	%
Andy Misseldine	YMCA 'A'	9	9	100
Daniel McTiernan	OLOP 'B'	6	6	100
Richard Andrews	Kingfisher 'A'	6	6	100
Nicky Heaps	Polish 'A'	6	6	100
Ian Girdler	Polish 'A'	3	3	100
Tom Maynard	Kingfisher 'A'	3	3	100
Ramesh Gehlot	Kingfisher 'A'	21	20	95.24
Martin Chodounsky	YMCA 'A'	39	37	94.87
Mark Banks	Kingfisher 'A'	27	25	92.59
Daniel Moses	OLOP 'A'	39	36	92.31
Martin Adams	Polish 'A'	24	22	91.67
Hari Gehlot	Kingfisher 'A'	24	22	91.67
Krasi Ivanov	OLOP 'B'	6	5	83.33
Norman Swift	OLOP 'A'	25	20	80
Ian Cole	OLOP 'A'	15	12	80
Mike Childs	OLOP 'A'	24	19	79.17
Bob Davis	YMCA 'A'	23	18	78.26

niggling injuries but seems like he's almost back to his best again. Mike's been practising hard up at KF and Ian Cole has just had what must be a career-best victory over Hari in a recent tournament. Super stuff and of course Liam continues to develop as one of the top Juniors in the country. Big games against Polish & YM and us on the horizon – will go a long way to determining whether they can turn into Champions.

MVP Daniel Moses & Liam McTiernan (nope, still can't split them)

Ha Ha. The Reading Evening Post (is it still called that?) said recently (this week in fact) that **Kingfisher 'A'** had just kept their slim title hopes alive!! Slim??? Slim??? Slim???? Slim is not a word that gets spoken too often in KFA with me & Ramesh in the side. Slim! Humph! I'll give them slim! Who writes their stuff? Hari's back in form after an understandably tricky spell having only played badminton in India. I wonder if he gets just as many "nets" when he plays that game? The kid just quietly goes about his business and is playing very well too. Oh and Tom & Rich are also bang in form Never believe what you read in the papers.

MVP Mark Banks

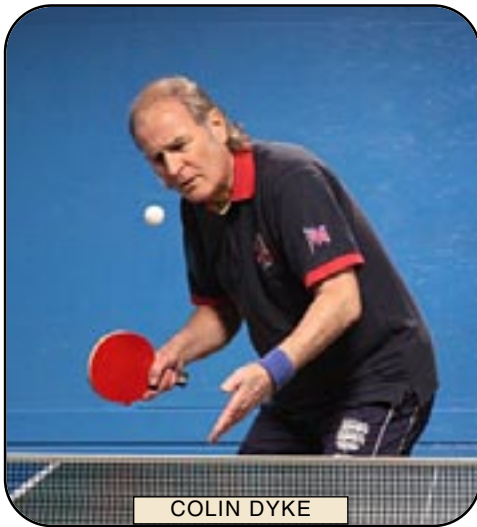
At one stage it looked as though **YMCA 'A'** had given up the ghost with Bob now in Devon but they're back with a vengeance and Pete Bradley is convinced they're still in the title hunt. Whether that's true or not remains to be seen but it's great to see that they're gonna continue as a unit and then take a further look at the end of the season. All playing as well as ever - what more can I say?. Can they beat us AND OLOP probably not – will they try – you can be sure they will.

MVP Martin Chodounsky

One team who won't want the season to end are **Polish 'A'**. Many of you won't know Ian Girdler but trust me he is one great player and if we hadn't signed Richie Rich then he would easily be the best signing of the season. Definitely would be up there fighting



DANIEL MOSES



COLIN DYKE

Mr Adams for the coveted MVP and a player of the class you normally associate with a Polish A team that's for sure. And will be great to see how he goes against the OLOP boys. I may even pitch up for that one. Very interesting indeed. Good to see Nick back and practising. Will be a while until he's fully back but great to see nonetheless. Steve &

Richard continue to find good form too. They can't win it but with all the big guns still to play them they'll have a big say in the title race this little lot.

MVP Martin Adams

David Streak wanted me to mention in this a couple of his "allegedly" cracking backhands that he did against my team mate when we played YMCA 'B' recently. Sadly though I was looking at the football scores on my phone and missed both. Shame that! Unfortunately Neil Hurford hasn't been able to turn out too much in the 2nd half but they're still going along quite nicely. Even Peter's picked up the odd win. Dave Gilham – you won't know him – he only plays against us but has a tidy game. Great guys. Great entertainment.

MVP Neil Hurford

Good stuff too from OLOP 'B' who have made a great signing of their own in Krasi Ivanov! Remember him? Yep he's back and whilst not quite the player he was will soon be getting the form back and when he does – watch out! Pretty good team this. Bradley's been playing well, Julian and Ollie too. Haven't seen Raf turn out for a while.

MVP Ollie Shaw - Maybe

Shame to see the captain of Tidmarsh Integralis 'A' Lee

	PL	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
OLOP 'A'	14	13	0	1	114	26	26
Kingfisher 'A'	13	11	2	0	108	22	24
YMCA 'A'	14	11	1	2	104	36	23
Polish 'A'	11	8	1	2	73	37	17
OLOP 'B'	13	7	1	5	68	62	15
Tidmarsh 'A'	14	6	1	7	62	78	13
Kingfisher 'C'	15	6	1	8	62	88	13
YMCA 'B'	15	6	0	9	71	79	12
Sonning C&P 'A'	14	2	2	10	41	99	6
Kingfisher 'B'	15	1	1	13	30	120	3
Kingfisher 'D'	14	0	0	14	27	113	0

"Jackpot" Calcutt still not recovered from injury. He did turn out against Sonning when short of players and probably shouldn't have and it remains to be seen whether he will recover. They're actually doing OK without him though to be fair. John's been getting all the luck go his way for once and Duncan too has been troubling the scorers. Sander as mentioned before is a player of some note.

MVP John Barclay

Another team with an injury (there's a lot of them about) is KFC who have had star man Keith Newell out for some time. Eric's playing well again. Good win over Krasi, Richard is one of the most improved on the circuit and James is still as keen as ever. When they're on their game this team are more than a handful. Good stuff.

MVP Keith Newell

Safe as houses are Sonning Common & Peppard 'A' who have piled up precious points in the battle at the bottom and will now definitely avoid the drop.

Much success for Simon Berry who played a starring role in the battle against Tidmarsh, rolling back the years with a super classy display. Jason too has played his part along with Nigel and Jarv who have both got on the scoresheet at times. Well played!

MVP Simon Berry

Things haven't been going awfully well for Kingfisher 'B' however they have had success at an individual level. Geoff in particular has been flying. Good stuff. Can't see them going down although one or two of them

may want to – hey Rog! Colin & Cliff great guys. Still do themselves justice. David's not quite reached the form of last year but can still do it on his day.

MVP Geoff Civil

Still enjoying themselves down at the bottom are Kingfisher 'D'. I asked both Ivor and Trev which they preferred – bottom of D1 or top of D2 and it was a unanimous vote for D1. Clearly they love it but clearly they're going down. Like KFB, great individual successes though and also great to see Johnny Morris back after his op. Playing well too is our John.

MVP Trevor Organ



HARI GEHLOT

DIVISION TWO *by Barry Carter*

Welcome to the third newsletter of the season and the first of 2012. The league is shaping up into what could be a really tight finish as only four points separate the top five teams and bottom five. At the top it's Kingfisher 'F' and maybe this time they might overcome the heebie-jeebies and make it to the top flight and in second place are OLOP 'D' who I think will make division one. Wokingham appear to be suffering from their annual loss of form at the wrong time of the season and could well miss out again. At the bottom I think it's fairly safe to suggest it will be Sonning Common & Peppard 'C' who will go down but as for the other spot it could be any one of the next three. Tidmarsh 'B' have two very important matches coming up against Post Office 'A' and OLOP 'D' and that could well determine their season. Apologies for the lack of scores but I seem to have misplaced several scorecards.

Kingfisher 'F' find themselves in their usual position heading into the home stretch, they have won two and drawn two



SHARON MITCHELL OF KINGFISHER 'F'

of their matches in 2012. The two wins were both 6 – 4 and came against Kingfisher 'E' and Post Office 'A' and the two draws were against promotion rivals Curzon Club 'A' and relegation-threatened OLOP 'E'. In the match against Curzon it took a 7-11, 11-6, 11-9, 11-9 win by Niall McGrane over John Willcocks in game ten to clinch a point and seal yet another maximum for himself. In the derby match with Kingfisher 'E' Lisa Williams defeated Peter Goatly 11-6, 8-11, 13-11, 6-11, 11-7 to draw them level at 4 – 4 before Carole Chard edged out Eric Holmes 10-12, 7-11, 12-10, 11-4, 11-4 to put them 5 – 4 up and Niall made the points safe with a 11-2, 11-8, 11-3 victory over Allan Bruton.

Team Stat: Have been in the promotion zone since week 2 of the season

Player Stat: Niall McGrane has yet to have a five-setter

Our Lady of Peace 'D' are my favourites for pro-

motion although they did lose their first match against the in-form Sonning Common & Peppard 'B', prior to that they had drawn 5 – 5 with Kingfisher 'E', defeated Post Office 'A' 9 – 1 and they bounced back to beat Sonning Common and Peppard 'C' 9 – 1. In those four matches Neil Bird has returned three maximums but only managed to beat Brian Meheux in the defeat to Sonning C & P 'C'. Clive Perry completed his third maximum of the season against Post Office 'A' whilst Steve Purchase seems to be going through a spell of poor form as he has only won 3 out of 9 since Christmas. Dan West enjoyed his first experience of division two table tennis when he played up against Sonning Common and Peppard 'C' where he won two against Paul Treadgold and Ian Ayres but missed out narrowly to Jeremy Willis.

Team Stat: Have won the most matches by the 9 – 1 scoreline (twice).

Player Stat: Neil Bird has won all six of his five-setters.

Wokingham 'A' have played four times in 2012 and they have had mixed fortunes with one win, two draws and a surprise defeat. The problem seems to lie in the sudden loss of form for Brian Chinneck who up until Christmas had won eleven of his last twelve matches whereas since he has only won three out of nine. The win came against Kingfisher 'E' as Martin Pugh won all three which included inflicting Phil Mead's only defeat of the season 11-9, 11-8, 11-9. The two draws came against Sonning Common & Peppard 'B' with Martin once again the star player with three wins over Malcolm Gregory, Keith Swain and Brian Meheux. Daryl Griffith also had a good night with victories over Malcolm and Brian. The second draw was against OLOP 'E' where unfortunately they could only field two players. Jim Spencer stepped up to the oche (sorry wrong sport) and won all three although Brian Chinneck lost all three of his in five. The defeat happened at Post Office 'A' as once again they could only field two players and lost 4 – 6.

Team Stat: Have won the most matches by the 8 – 2 scoreline (twice).

Player Stat: Jim Spencer has been involved in the most four set

	PL	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Kingfisher 'F'	13	8	3	2	72	58	19
OLOP 'D'	12	8	2	2	74	46	18
Wokingham 'A'	13	7	2	4	76	54	16
Curzon Club 'A'	13	6	3	4	76	54	15
Sonning C & P 'B'	13	6	3	4	71	59	15
Kingfisher 'E'	13	5	3	5	67	63	13
Tidmarsh 'B'	12	4	2	6	63	57	10
OLOP 'E'	12	3	4	5	56	64	10
Post Office 'A'	12	4	1	7	45	75	9
Sonning C & P 'C'	13	0	1	12	30	100	1

LEADING AVERAGES

Player	Team	P	W	L	%
Niall McGrane (Kingfisher 'F')		29	26	3	90%
John Willcocks (Curzon Club 'A')		33	28	5	85%
Neil Bird (OLOP 'D')		36	30	6	83%
Keith Swain (Sonning C&P 'B')		33	25	8	76%
Malcolm Gregory (Sonning C&P 'B')		30	20	10	67%
Jeremy Willis (Sonning C&P 'C')		27	18	9	67%
Jon Willis (Curzon Club 'A')		24	16	8	67%
Daryl Griffith (Wokingham 'A')		24	16	8	67%
Andrew Johnson (OLOP 'E')		18	12	6	67%

matches (fourteen, winning 8 & losing 6)

Curzon Club 'A' have a real chance of finishing second if they want to. They have only lost once in 2012 and have recorded two wins and a draw. The two wins were against Tidmarsh 'B' where John Willcocks and Jon Willis both won three in a 7 – 3 scoreline and the other came last week by the same score against OLOP 'E'. John Willcocks went home with his six maximums in eleven matches, Mick Maynard with his sixth brace and it also had a John Walker victory thrown in as well, every time John plays it seems he gets so close to winning and this week it happened as he won 11-7, 11-4, 11-5 against Wendy Porter. The draw happened against the leaders Kingfisher 'F' and saw John Willcocks win only two against Lisa Williams and Carole Chard, Jon Willis only won once although he lost a tight contest to Lisa 11-2, 10-12, 12-10, 4-11, 4-11. The defeat came at Kingfisher 'E' as John missed the match and the other three couldn't quite grasp a point as they lost 4 – 6 although four of the ten games went to five.

Team Stat: Have the best doubles average 10 out of 13 = 77%

Player Stat: John Willcocks has won the most matches 3 – 0 on sixteen out of twenty six occasions.

Sonning Common and Peppard 'B' are the form team of the half as they have won all three in 2012 and have progressed up the table from eighth to their current position of fifth. In previous seasons they tend to be quick starters before tailing off once the Christmas decorations come down but this season it seems to be the other way around and seem to be sprinting towards the promotion line. **Malcolm Gregory** has won all nine of his matches which included a tight win over yours truly (ok so it wasn't that tight, along the lines of the recent West Brom match). Keith Swain only won once that night against Mike Aistrop, and Brian Meheux also had a good win over someone who was playing up from division three but can't remember his name. Their best win of the year came against the leaders OLOP 'D' as both Malcolm and Keith won all three against Clive Perry, Neil Bird and Steve Purchase. **Go for it, Sonning 'B' - you know you want to...Division One next season** and you can have a local derby against the 'A' team!

Team Stat: Have been involved in the most 6 – 4 or 4

– 6 matches - on nine occasions.

Player Stat: Brian Meheux has lost the most four setters on twelve occasions.

P.S. Well done to Malcolm on winning the senior vets at the recent Reading Closed

Kingfisher 'E' have won only once in the second half of the season and they'll probably be buoyed by the fact that I think they are safe for another season. Their victory came at the expense of high flying Curzon Club 'A' where they took advantage of John Willcocks not playing to win 6 – 4. Allan Bruton returned his second maximum of the season although Mick Maynard took him close, Allan eventually ran out the winner 8-11, 9-11, 11-9, 12-10, 12-10.

Daniel Grover returned to the team and won two against John Walker and John Willis both in five-sets. They picked up a useful point against OLOP 'D' thanks to two from Daniel and Peter Goatly and a bit of help from Eric. The two losses came at Wokingham 'A' and Kingfisher 'F' who are both pushing for promotion, in the Wokingham match Phil Mead lost his 100% record to Martin Pugh as they lost 8 – 2.

Team Stat: Have been in all the top six positions at one stage of the season with their current position being the lowest.

Player Stat: Daniel Grover has been involved in the joint most five-setters (ten, winning five, losing five). Allan Bruton is the other joint most five-setter man (winning six and losing four).

Tidmarsh 'B' have only played three times since Christmas and have picked up one win and two defeats which has seen them slip towards possible relegation danger (sounds a bit like Wolves really!). The win came against Sonning Common and Peppard 'C' where Andy Stephens made his return to the fold after half a season out and it was if he hadn't been away as he won all three in a 9 – 1 win. The other two matches were against Sonning



MALCOLM GREGORY

Common and Peppard 'B' where I made my third appearance of the season and managed to beat Keith Swain in a close five – setter before losing to both Brian Meheux and Malcolm Gregory. Chris Webb was our player of the night as he won two against Brian and Keith but it didn't stop us from slipping to a 6 – 4 defeat. The other match which was my fourth was at Curzon Club where we lost 3 – 7 (a bit of a pattern is emerging now, whenever I play we lose). François Durand, Mike Aistrop and I all beat John Walker but didn't have much success against the Johns of the Willis and Willcocks varieties.

Team Sta: Haven't won any of the four matches that I have played (drawn one, lost three)...now there's a lesson in there somewhere!

Player Stat: Steve Callidine has won every time one of his matches has been a four-setter (seven occasions)

Our Lady of Peace 'E' quote from my first 2011 newsletter report "OLOP 'E' although currently just above the relegation zone should be top half come the end of the season and might just sneak that second promotion place if things go their way". Obviously things haven't gone their way and they still find themselves hovering above the relegation zone, Andy Johnson being 12,000 miles away and missing five matches didn't help them. They haven't won in 2012 but have picked up two fantastic points against Wokingham 'A' 5 – 5 and Kingfisher 'F' 5 – 5 who are both pushing for promotion. The fact Wokingham could only field two players helped them a bit but Wendy Porter and Hanson Xu won one each. In the Kingfisher match Andy returned after his trip and won two and coupled with Hanson's two and Wendy's one they picked up another point. The loss came at Curzon Club 'A' where they lost 7 – 3.

Team Stat: Their losses have come in batches of two...beware the next match against Kingfisher 'E'

Player Stat: Whenever Wendy has gone home having won one



WENDY PORTER

match, OLOP 'E' have drawn

Post Office 'A' are on the verge of a Houdini act, they have won the same amount of matches in four this half as they did



in the whole of the first half put together. The two wins came against Sonning Common and Peppard 'C' where the trio of Simon Hopkins, John Simmonds and Ray Webb all won two matches with them only losing to Jeremy Willis. The second win came rather fortuitously against a two man Wokingham team. Mick Grantham played up from division five in their most recent match at Kingfisher 'F' and won a battle against Sharon Mitchell but it couldn't prevent them from losing 4 – 6. In the coming weeks they have the two sides above them to play and any sort of result in either or both of those matches could be the difference between staying up and going down.

Team Stat: Three of their four wins have been by the 7 – 3 scoreline, the other by 6 – 4

Player Stat: Simon Hopkins has lost 12 of his 24 games by the 1 – 3 scoreline

Sonning Common and Peppard 'C' are now in real danger of relegation as they are currently nine points from safety. With only five games left to play it might just be a case of looking forward to the parachute payments next season. Unfortunately for them they are on the back of an eleven-match losing streak (sounds a bit like Wolves again) and with first, third and fourth to play in the next three weeks it couldn't be any harder but the way strange things happen at this time of year six points are in the offing. Jeremy Willis has been the outstanding player for them this season but his form seems to have deserted him in 2012 as he only picked up one in the 9 – 1 derby night defeat to Sonning 'B' and only two against OLOP 'D' in the 8 – 2 defeat against the champions-elect. Tim Raby won two matches in the 7 – 3 defeat against Post Office 'A' and Matt Stone was the other winner on that particular night. Paul Treadgold and Ian Ayres have battled well throughout the season and from the scorecards that I have they seem to get so close and then don't quite make it.

Team Stat: Have lost by the 3 – 7 scoreline on the most occasions (five times)

Player Stat: Jeremy Willis has won 18 of their 30 games

Well that's it for this report, apologies once again for the lack of scorecard information. Here's to an exciting finale both at the top and bottom of the table.

DIVISION THREE *by Nick Lean*

Welcome to the last "in-flight" report of the season. While the promotion places seem to be sown up there could be a battle between as many as five teams to determine which ones will finish in the relegation places.

Still topping the table are **OLOP 'F'** who thrashed Sonning Sports to start their New Year with a bang as Richard Skellett, Harry Brough and Sami Almbrok all hit maximums. Another comfortable win came at Springfield as Harry and Sami again won 3 each (Sami winning 9/9) while Mark Bullion contributed one win. But once again they were held to a draw by their nemesis, Pangbourne WMC, as Sami could only win one and Harry lost only his second contest of the season (at that point), once again to Leroy Wilson. Pat Daniels (in only his second match of the season) beat Howard Taylor 11-9 in the fifth to help his team scramble a point. They looked to be heading for defeat at Kingfisher 'G' as both Harry and Sami went down to Dave Duncan before both recovered to win their two other singles and win the doubles to escape with a hard fought point.

Tidmarsh 'C''s "new" signing **Andy Stephens** kept their promotion push and their 100% record on track by starting his season with three maximums as they reeled off three more wins. Andy started impressively at OLOP 'G' by beating Chris & Dan West and Mark Kirton without dropping a game, then did the same against Tilehurst Meths, before finally losing an end (11-13) to Pat Burns at Kingfisher. In these matches Steve Ricks won 4/6, Barry Carter 7/9 and Dave Reynolds (Snr) won one against Tilehurst. That makes 8 registered players who have now contributed to Tidmarsh's title challenge, plus another who played up from Division 4 - so they will need a few extra trophies come the end of the season!

Following the pace-setters are the teams in mid-table which



CHRIS AND DAN WEST, OF OLOP 'G'

seems to start at third place!

OLOP 'G' have played just two matches, losing 2 - 8 to Tidmarsh and defeating Sonning Sports 6 - 4, but remain 'best of the rest' in third place. Dan West hit a good maximum at Sonning Sports while Alex Fear won two and Mark Kirton was unlucky to win only once, as he only lost out to Dave Chard 10-12 in the fifth.

Following Hugh's unfortunate injury, **Milestone 'A'** had to postpone their first two matches of the New Year and he probably wasn't fully fit once he did play. So a draw with Kingfisher 'H', thanks to a maximum from John Tucker, and a 4 - 6 home defeat to Springfield has seen them stagnate in the table. Against Springfield JT lost four match points to Phil Burke when he was 10-6 up in the fifth, while John Crosfield lost all three of his contests in five games, including going down 9-11 to Phil Burke in their decider having been 2 games to 1 up. Another close match followed at Pangbourne where Hugh & JT won two apiece and John C won one. That match hinged on the doubles which they won to seal both points.

STOP PRESS: Milestone - 7 Tilehurst Meths - 3. A return to fitness & form for Hugh Crosfield who hit his first maximum of 2012. (not in table or averages)

Kingfisher 'H' beat Springfield 6 - 4 to reverse the result of the corresponding match at the start of the season, with Steve Woolnough, Pat Burns and Ken Robb all winning two. They then beat Pangbourne 7 - 3 thanks to a good Pat Burns maximum, two from Mike Dorrington and one from Steve



STEVE RICKS AND ANDY STEPHENS

Team	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
OLOP 'F'	12	9	3	0	86	34	21
Tidmarsh 'C'	10	10	0	0	80	20	20
OLOP 'G'	11	7	1	3	65	45	15
Milestone 'A'	11	5	4	2	62	48	14
Kingfisher 'H'	13	5	2	6	59	71	12
Tilehurst Meths 'A'	11	3	3	5	48	62	9
Kingfisher 'G'	11	2	4	5	46	64	8
Pangbourne WMC	14	2	4	8	56	84	8
Springfield 'A'	13	3	1	9	48	82	7
Sonning Sports 'A'	12	1	2	9	40	80	4

Woolnough. A third win on the trot was prevented by Milestone's resistance in a match that swung one way then the other. Despite Pat and Mike winning two each it ended as a draw as they narrowly lost the doubles. Steve & Pat had some close games in their recent match with Tidmarsh, but in the end their opponents were too strong and Kingfisher were well beaten.

According to their current points tally, Tilehurst Meths and Kingfisher 'G' seem to be on the edge of the relegation zone, but as they both have matches in hand on the teams below them I don't see this as a real concern for them.

Tilehurst Meths 'A' started the new year with a battling draw against Pangbourne in which Mel Lovegrove was Man of the Match as he recorded his first maximum of the season, including an excellent win over Leroy Wilson 12-10 in the fifth, while John Virgo also won two. They could have snatched a win in this match as John & Mel were 10-6 up in final game of the doubles, but Pangbourne fought back to win that 13-15. Tilehurst lost at Tidmarsh, although Melvyn played really well to beat both Dave Reynolds Snr and Barry Carter over five games, in the latter coming from 2 games down to win the next three 18-16, 11-9, 15-13. But the critical result for them was a re-arranged fixture with Springfield which they won 8 - 2 thanks to maximums from Phil Jones and John Virgo, plus two wins for Ian Cockling. As they have to play three of the teams below in the run-in, I believe Tilehurst will pull away from the dog-fight that's to come.

Kingfisher 'G''s first four fixtures of the year included two 'blanks' and a postponement. But when they did play they struggled to win a point against bottom team Sonning Sports, having been 1 - 4 down against them. But Dave Duncan and Chris Pusey eventually won two each and paired up to win the doubles to seal a draw. The situation was reversed as Kingfisher were 4 - 1 up against high-flying OLOP 'F', before seeing their lead whittled away and eventually they had to settle for a point. In this match Dave Duncan scored a superb maximum, including the scalps of Harry Brough and Sami Almbrok, while Chris Pusey only lost out to Harry 5-11 in the fifth and Allen Pack lost in a similar fashion to Sami. Again with matches to come against the teams around them, Kingfisher 'G' are surely strong enough to avoid a relegation battle.

Pangbourne WMC are probably the first of the real contenders for relegation. Having picked up only 5 points in the first half of the season, they have played now more matches (5) than any other team since the New Year, taking just 3 points (as they did from these fixtures in the first half). Their concern must be that their remaining four fixtures this season netted them only one point the first time around.

Having said that, Pangbourne had a good draw at Tilehurst Meths thanks to Leroy winning two, Clive Taylor and Peter Welch

one each, plus a doubles win being snatched at the last. But they lost at home to Kingfisher 'H', although Leroy wasn't playing in that one, and it was probably a point dropped in a draw at Springfield, despite Pete Welch and Clive Taylor winning two each, as Leroy lost out 9-11 in the fifth to Des Hele and only won one. However there was a magnificent treble from Leroy in a battling draw at OLOP 'F', as he beat both Harry Brough and Sami Almbrok, then held off a determined challenge from Pat Daniels. Roger Stevens also won two, which included recovering from losing the second game 11-0 to Sami before beating him in four games. Milestone's was another close match which probably hinged on the doubles as both were won by the visitors, the doubles over 5 games and the match 6 - 4.

Springfield lost at Kingfisher 'H' despite Phil Burke having a good match and winning all three, then without Phil lost 2 - 8 to current leaders OLOP 'F', with Seth Martin and Des Hele winning one each. They also lost at Tilehurst Meths, but had an important draw with Pangbourne, thanks to another maximum from Phil. But their surprise result came against Milestone as the whole team contributed to a great victory - Seth had a crucial 5-game win over John Crosfield, with Ian Boaden winning two, including the scalp of John Tucker, while Phil came from 6-10 down in the fifth to beat JT at the start of his maximum. That recent result gives them a fighting chance of avoiding relegation but they will need to be at their best in the matches to come because of their remaining opponents. Of these, the only ones from whom took any points in the first half was Sonning Sports, who themselves will be fighting for every point they can get.

The **Sonning Sports** team are not in a good position and had a bad start to the year as they suffered a whitewash at OLOP 'F', winning just 4 games between them. Cap'n Bob did well to take Harry Brough to a deciding game, but was unable to turn it into a win. Sports then took a point from their match at Kingfisher 'G' although they were disappointed as they felt they really should have won. (I expect Kingfisher felt the same, Bob!) Nigel hung on to win all three, two in the deciding game, while the Bobs won one each, Bob S winning his in the fifth while both of Bob W's defeats came in the decider - clearly a very close match. A rejuvenated Dave Chard won two against OLOP 'G' while Cap'n Bob won one and they paired up to take the doubles, but fell just short of taking a point from the match. I feel Sports will have to win both their key matches to come, against Springfield & Pangbourne, and hope their rivals' results go their way to be in with a chance of pulling off 'the great escape'.

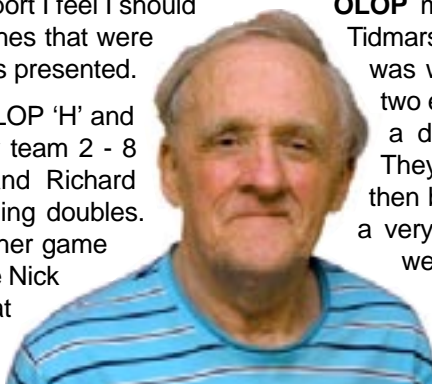
Finally, and on a much more important note, I would like to wish Nigel Goodman a full and speedy recovery following his recent car accident and spell in hospital.

LEADING AVERAGES				
Player	Team	P	W	%
Harry Brough	OLOP 'F'	36	33	91.7%
Barry Carter	Tidmarsh 'C'	30	26	86.7%
Phil Burke	Springfield 'A'	33	26	78.8%
Sami Almbrok	OLOP 'F'	36	28	77.8%
Patrick Burns	Kingfisher 'H'	27	21	77.8%
Dave Reynolds Snr	Tidmarsh 'C'	21	16	76.2%
Chris West	OLOP 'G'	16	12	75.0%
Dan West	OLOP 'G'	29	20	69.0%
John Tucker	Milestone 'A'	33	22	66.7%
John Virgo	Tilehurst Meths	21	14	66.7%
Hugh Crosfield	Milestone 'A'	33	20	60.6%

DIVISION FOUR *by Derek Harrison*

Hello everyone. Before I start my report I feel I should bring you up to date with the matches that were played after my previous report was presented.

First the re-arranged match between OLOP 'H' and Tilehurst Meths 'B' was won by the away team 2 - 8 with Nigel Rowland winning all three and Richard Lownsbrough and Nick Barnes both gaining doubles. Neil Havard won two for OLOP. In the other game Curzon 'B' beat Tidmarsh 'D' 8 - 2 and here Nick Lean played out of his skin to obtain a great hat trick besides teaming up with me to take Dave 'E' and Terry's 100% doubles record. Doubles were gained by Geoff Johnson, Derek Harrison and Terry Hardie.



The second half of the season promises to be well contested with three teams pushing for promotion but I have to say that Tilehurst Meths and Polish 'B' look to be the favourites. At the bottom it could be a case of any two from Polish 'C', Curzon 'C', Kingfisher 'I', Sonning 'D' and dare I say it Dave, Tidmarsh 'D' to suffer relegation.

Tilehurst Meths maintained their lead at the top by beating Curzon 'C' 3 - 7. Nigel, Nick and Richard all obtained doubles. They then beat Polish 'C' 8 - 2 where Nigel and Richard both gained trebles with Nick getting a fine double. At home to Birch Copse they stormed to a 9 - 1 victory with Nigel and Nick both obtaining maximums. Although Nigel had to work hard against reserve Roy Hull, only beating him 11-4, 12-10, 8-11, 12-14, 12-10. Chris did well to gain a double. At Tidmarsh they came away with a 1 - 9 win with Nigel and Chris both obtaining trebles. For Chris it was his first of the season and I believe also the first at this level. I have to say he is probably the most improved player in the division. Richard played his part by gaining a double. As far as Nigel is concerned he is having his best ever season and at the time of writing has only lost 4 times and is deservedly top of the averages having only missed one match.

Polish 'B' had a close 6 - 4 win over Birch Copse thanks to a great maximum from Jacek and a fine double from Darek. They also teamed up to win the doubles. At Tidmarsh they came away with a 2 - 8 victory with Jacek and Darek both hitting maximums. Marcin won one by beating reserve Mike Bundy. At home to an under-strength OLOP team they won 8 - 2 with Jacek getting a three-straight maximum. Marcin and Darek both won two each. They then lost ground in the title race when they visited Wokingham and went down 6 - 4. Jacek and Darek won two each but sadly for them Marcin failed to score.

OLOP maintained their charge by winning 2 - 8 at Tidmarsh with Neil obtaining yet another treble. He was well supported by Alistair and Dave who won two each. At home to Curzon 'B' they were held to a draw with Neil and Dave winning two each. They also teamed up to win the doubles. They then beat fading Wokingham 8 - 2 with Neil getting a very good maximum. Giving him good support were Alistair and Dave who won two each. At Polish 'B' they were without Alistair and Dave and as a result they lost 8 - 2 with Neil winning the two sets by beating Marcin and Darek. They then returned to winning ways

by beating Sonning 7 - 3 with Neil and Dave both obtaining maximums.

Curzon 'B' started the new year by beating Kingfisher 7 - 3 with Geoff on top form and winning all three which included a very long game against George which lasted about 45 minutes, beating him 15-13, 9-11, 11-8, 13-15, 11-9 and also teamed up with Derek to win a close doubles by getting home 11-9 in the 5th end. Derek won two and Jim won one to give us both points. At OLOP we shared the spoils thanks mainly to a superb maximum from Geoff. Nick and Jim played their part by winning one each. At home to Wokingham we won 6 - 4 with Jim, Geoff and Derek all winning two each. At Polish 'C' I had a mare and lost all three which meant that a double from Nick and a single from Jim was not enough to prevent a 7 - 3 defeat.

Birch Copse played a two man Wokingham and romped home 9 - 1. Jes and Richard won two each with Mike winning one by beating John Belcher. At Polish 'B' they went down 6 - 4. Richard won two and Jes and Mike both won one each. They then entertained Sonning and cantered to a 7 - 3 victory with Richard winning all three and Jes and Mike both obtaining doubles. In the local derby against Tilehurst Meths they went down 9 - 1 with Richard beating Chris. Against Kingfisher a good team performance saw them get home 6 - 4 with Richard winning all three and Mike getting a good double which included an 11-8, 9-11, 12-10, 3-11, 11-9 victory over Michael. Andras Ardanhazi playing up from the 5th div had a fine win over Derek Spicer.

As mentioned above **Wokingham** could only turn up with two players at Birch Copse and went down 9 - 1. Ken won the only set by beating Mike. With their best team they then won 9 - 1 at home to Tidmarsh with Ken and Richard both winning all three. Tony did well to gain a double. At in-form



NIGEL ROWLAND OF TILEHURST METHS

OLOP they went down 8 - 2 with Ken and John Beardmore both picking up singles. Tony was on top form at Curzon, hitting a superb maximum but sadly his efforts were in vain because they lost 6 - 4. He also teamed up with Ken to win the doubles. They then played their best team against Polish 'B' and won 6 - 4 with Tony and Richard winning two each and Ken picking up a vital single by beating Marcin. Tony and Richard won a good doubles.

Tidmarsh started the second half by losing 2 - 8 to OLOP. Only Terry troubled the scorers by beating Alistair and Dave. At Wokingham they went down 9 - 1. Terry saved the whitewash by beating Tony three straight. They were without Terry against Polish 'B' and went down 2 - 8 with Dave 'E' and Mick beating Marcin. Dave was unlucky against Jacek, only going down 7-11, 11-9, 11-9, 9-11, 10-12. At home to the leaders Tilehurst Meths they crashed to a 1 - 9 defeat with Dave Edwards getting a fine win over Richard.

Curzon 'C' lost 8 - 2 at a full strength Kingfisher 'I' with Terry beating Michael. Terry and Linda teamed up to win the doubles. Linda was missing when they played Tilehurst and as a result they went down 3 - 7. Terry played great, gaining a hat trick by beating Nigel 11-8, 10-12, 11-8, 8-11, 11-6, Nick 6-11, 11-8, 13-11, 11-5 and Richard 9-11, 11-4, 11-7, 11-9. Very well done Terry, for what is in my opinion easily the best performance in the division since my previous notes. In fact he did the double over Nigel who is top of the averages. Against Polish 'C' it took a set 10 win for Terry over Stephen to give them a share of the spoils. Terry also beat Jan to give him a double. Linda did well by beating Grant and Jan. The two of them won a close doubles by beating Grant and Stephen 11-6, 8-11, 11-9, 9-11, 11-7.

Sonning lost a close game at Polish 'C' 6 - 4. Derek, Anthony and Jim all won one each by beating different players. Derek beat Stephen, Jim beat Krys and Anthony beat Grant. At Birch Copse they went down 7 - 3 and here Jon and

Team	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Tilehurst Meths 'B'	14	12	1	1	105	35	25
Polish 'B'	14	10	2	2	37	53	22
OLOP 'H'	15	9	2	4	88	62	20
Curzon Club 'B' *	14	9	3	3	81	59	19
Birch Copse 'A'	15	7	3	5	77	73	17
Wokingham 'B'	14	7	1	6	75	65	15
Tidmarsh 'D'	15	4	2	9	53	97	10
Curzon Club 'C' *	14	2	5	7	59	81	9
Polish 'C'	15	3	2	10	53	97	8
Kingfisher 'I' *	14	2	3	9	56	84	7
Sonning C&P 'D'	14	2	2	10	56	84	6

Anthony both won one each. They also teamed up to win the doubles with Anthony and Jon beating Jes and Richard 5-11, 6-11, 7-11. At OLOP they lost for the fourth match in a row and have slipped to the bottom. Their plight has not been helped because Mark has been out injured and has only played in five matches. Anyway in the match Derek, Jon and Anthony all beat Chris Moses in a 7 - 3 defeat.

Polish 'C' had a vital 6 - 4 win over Sonning thanks to a great team effort with Krys, Grant and Stephen all winning two each. At Tilehurst Meths they went down 8 - 2. Stephen had a very good win over Nick by beating him 11-3, 9-11, 11-8, 5-11, 8-11. He also played in the doubles with Grant and they beat Richard and Nick over 5 games. Without Grant they then lost 2 - 8 to Kingfisher 'I', with Stephen winning the only singles set by beating Michael. At Curzon 'C' they gained a good draw thanks to doubles from Grant and Stephen and a vital single from Jan. They then beat Curzon 'B' 7 - 3 at cold blow lane (Sorry, at Polish) because it was very cold and as a result moved out of the bottom two. Krys, Grant, and Stephen all obtained doubles. In fact Krys made a mockery of his average by playing out of his skin and I feel that there is more to come which could make the difference between staying up and going down. Going back to the cold both Nick and Grant suffered with bad cramps and at one point Grant was lying on the floor in agony.

Kingfisher played Leo Long for the first time who won all three 3 straight as did George. Michael weighed in with a double which gave them an 8 - 2 win over Curzon 'C'. At Curzon 'B' they went down 7- 3 with Michael gaining a double and George a single. Leo came back into the side against Polish 'C' and won all three with George doing likewise and giving them able backing was Michael who won two. At Birch Copse they went down 6 - 4. Leo won two thus losing his 100% record and Michael won one and the two of them won the doubles.

Finally enjoy the rest of the season and I know the horse has bolted but I do not get many match comments so I would be pleased to get more.

Cheers

Derek

DIV 4 LEADING AVERAGES

Player	Team	P	W	%
Nigel Rowland	Tilehurst Meths 'B'	39	35	89.74
Geoff Johnson	Curzon Club 'B' *	30	26	86.67
Neil Havard	OLOP 'H'	42	35	83.33
Tony Eames	Wokingham 'B'	27	22	81.48
Jacek Krzyzanowski	Polish 'B'	42	34	80.95
Richard Green	Birch Copse 'A'	35	28	80
Richard Neville	Wokingham 'B'	24	18	75
Derek Kaminski	Polish 'B'	42	31	73.81
Richard Lownsborough	Tilehurst Meths 'B'	33	24	72.73
Nick Barnes	Tilehurst Meths 'B'	21	15	71.43
Dave Godfrey	OLOP 'H'	33	23	69.7
Terry Spice	Curzon Club 'C' *	42	29	69.05
Michael Houghton	Kingfisher 'I' *	39	26	66.67
Nick Lean	Curzon Club 'B' *	30	19	63.33

DIVISION FIVE *by Duncan Abbott*

Things are really hotting up in the race for the Division 5 title.

Five wins out of six have projected **Kingfisher 'K'** to the top of the pile. After starting the year with a 9 - 1 win in their re-arranged game with Milestone 'B' and a 5 - 5 draw with OLOP 'I', they then accounted for Birch Copse 'B' (6 - 4) and Kingfisher 'J' (8 - 2). Trebles from the unbeaten Jean-Noel Thepaut and Gabor Radnoti and a brace from Nils Wedi gave them a resounding success over Milestone 'B'. Against OLOP 'I' Jean-Noel was once again the star with a treble and a share in the doubles with Joaquin Munoz-Sabater. Gabor's win over Mac DeGuzman secured the point.

Against Birch Copse 'B' Nils was the star with a superb treble including a close five-set (or should that be five-



Didier? Besides I'd have thought this team would be aiming higher than second place!!

That defeat to Kingfisher 'K' brought to an end the long run at the top of the table for **Tilehurst Methodists 'C'**. Both Catherine and Bob Winter who had been unbeaten for over two months suffered at the hands of the irrepressible Jean-Noel, and a further loss each for Catherine and Dave Jones brought an end to the unbeaten run that stretched back to September.

Before that it was business as usual, since maximums for Bob and Catherine meant another 8 - 2 thrashing of Birch Copse 'B' – even captain Mal Collis got in on the act, gaining his first win of the season at the expense of Melanie. Next up were Kingfisher 'J' and a comprehensive 9 - 1 win for Bob, Catherine & Dave – only a win for Andrew Talaga over Dave preventing the whitewash.

Team	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Kingfisher 'K'	14	11	1	2	86	54	23
Tilehurst Meths 'C'	13	10	1	2	93	37	21
Springfield 'B'	14	10	0	4	79	61	20
Post Office 'B'	12	5	4	3	66	54	14
Milestone 'B'	13	6	2	5	67	63	14
OLOP 'I'	11	3	5	3	56	54	11
Sonning C&P 'E'	12	3	3	6	54	66	9
Birch Copse 'B'	12	2	3	7	50	70	7
Tidmarsh 'E'	13	2	2	9	48	82	6
Kingfisher 'J'	14	0	3	11	41	99	3

game?) victory over yours truly. Joaquin gave excellent support with a brace and Gabor's win over Melanie Griffiths gave them the match points.

Against Kingfisher 'J' both Jean-Noel and Gabor went through the card and Stuart Mitchell gained an impressive win over visiting captain Derek Crombie. Captain Didier Garçon made a rare appearance, teaming up with Jean-Noel to win the doubles.

Their next two wins were both crucial in their battle for the league title. Jean-Noel's treble led the way to a tremendous 6 - 4 win at Tilehurst Methodists 'C' who were leading the table at the time. Gabor's brace included an impressive win over Catherine Venning who went into the match with a 90% average. Joaquin was unable to repeat his earlier season win over Catherine but that was not necessary as Jean-Noel and Gabor's doubles success clinched the match points.

Their 10 - 0 whitewash (the first of the season in Div 5) against Springfield 'B' did come as a surprise to me, despite the presence of the big guns Jean-Noel, Nils and Gabor. Even more of a surprise was Didier's comment that second place had been secured! A bit of chicken counting perhaps

Further trebles for Bob and Catherine accounted for Springfield 'B' 7 - 3. When delivering the scorecard Bob was very gracious when he told me what a very sociable evening it was with no mention of promotion. Unfortunately I wasn't in the following week to get his reaction to the Kingfisher defeat! But Bob is right of course – the enjoyment of the game is far more important than results, even though we do tend to enjoy our wins more than our losses!

You will also notice that I will not be mentioning promotion or relegation in this report. No it's not because my own team is fighting relegation – well maybe partly! But there are wider issues which are covered in a separate article in this newsletter entitled "Dwindling numbers – am I doing my bit?"

Also involved in the Div 5 title shake up are **Springfield 'B'**. As mentioned above defeats to Tilehurst Methodists 'C' (7 - 3) and Kingfisher 'K' (10 - 0) dealt a severe blow to their hopes. At the start of the year it was business as usual with an 8 - 2 win over Kingfisher 'J', courtesy of a treble from John Burke, and braces from Chris Speight and Dan Mortimer. Further trebles from John and Dan accounted for Tidmarsh 'E' (7 - 3). In the defeat against Tilehurst Methodists 'C' John, Chris and Dan all beat Mal but succumbed to Bob and Catherine. They did recover with a 7 - 3 win over Sonning Common & Peppard 'E', John scoring a treble, Paul Jenkins a double and a single from Chris. In the 10 - 0 defeat at Kingfisher 'K', Dan put up a strong battle against Gabor and the doubles partnership (whoever they were) did likewise against Nils & Didier.

They are now a bit off the pace in the title race, but there are still six weeks to go and plenty of chances for further twists and turns.

Injury problems have somewhat halted the progress of **Post Office 'B'**. Feliks Ziemia injured his back and has been out of action since the turn of the year, and Linda



SIAD COLE OF OLOP 'I'

Davis' experiment of playing table tennis in bare feet didn't go according to plan and she is also battling to get fit. The first games was postponed as Mick Grantham was unavailable and they suffered a further postponement when the water pipes in Caversham Road burst which meant OLOP 'I' couldn't reach their premises in Richfield Avenue. Their first two matches of the new year against Milestone 'B' and Birch Copse 'B' both ended in draws. Mick and captain Ted Cripps scored braces in the Milestone fixture and kept their unbeaten record going in the doubles. Against Birch Copse 'B' Mick scored his first maximum of the season and a brace from Ted looked set to give them a close win. However Melanie and Andras Ardanhazi had other ideas and brought to an end Mick & Ted's unbeaten run to gain a draw.

Ted's maximum and Mick's brace gave them a 6 - 4 win over Kingfisher 'J'. Over these three matches Barbara Gatward has battled very gamely – she took games off Melanie and Andras at Birch Copse and had very close games against Kingfisher's Helen Sparkes – but that crucial victory has just eluded her.

Milestone 'B' have had a lot of action on the table recently. They had two re-arranged games to catch up on, and both ended in defeats – 9 - 1 at Kingfisher 'K' where Oliver Bonser's win over Nils prevented a white-wash; and a 6 - 4 defeat to local rivals Sonning Common Peppard 'E' despite braces from Oliver and John Simpson, captain Gerard Thorp suffering a rare off night.

Braces from Oliver & Gerard and a single from John gave them a draw with Post Office 'B'. They then suffered a surprise 7 - 3 defeat at home to strugglers Tidmarsh 'E', two wins from Oliver and one from Gerard. Revenge was gained against Sonning Common & Peppard 'E' with a 6 - 4 win courtesy of a

treble from Oliver and a brace from Gerard. They have also played a week 20 match against Kingfisher 'J', a good decision as a treble from Oliver, a brace from Gerard and a single from John gave them a 7 - 3 win.

Much credit has to go to this team who have played all their matches with only three players – I can't remember the last time a team went through the season with 3 ever-present players, hopefully Oliver, Gerard and John will have achieved this feat come the end of March.

By contrast **OLOP 'I'** have played only two matches since the last report thanks to an unkind fixture list and the trials and tribulations of Thames Water. Both matches ended in draws, at Kingfisher 'K' (two wins from Siad Cole and Phil Saunders and one from Mac) and at Tidmarsh 'E', thanks to a treble from Siad and a brace from Phil. Captain Daniel Thorne played at Tidmarsh but lost all three.

Sonning Common & Peppard 'E' won their match re-arranged from October, a 6 - 4 success against local rivals Milestone 'B'. Tony House was in top form with a treble, Dave Aust and Mike Casserley chipped in with one apiece and a doubles win gave them victory.

However their other three matches have all ended in defeat. They lost 6 - 4 at Tidmarsh 'E' despite another treble from Tony. Dave took a single but Phil Turton was unlucky in having to concede to Dave Humphrey because of injury thus handing Tidmarsh the match points. A brace from Dave and single from Tony were not enough to prevent a 7 - 3 defeat at the hands of Springfield 'B'. Dave scored another brace against Milestone 'B', Mike and Phil had one win apiece but this was not enough to prevent the Caversham side from gaining swift revenge.

Birch Copse 'B' have gained one point from the three games played since the turn of the year, a 5 - 5 draw with Post Office 'B'. Prior to that they reciprocated the score-lines from the first half of the season against Tilehurst Methodists 'C' (2 - 8) and Kingfisher 'K' (4 - 6).

At Tilehurst, Andras and Duncan Abbott both recorded wins over Mal. Duncan's clash with Bob went to five as did Andras' encounter with Catherine. Against Kingfisher Duncan beat Gabor and Joaquin and lost 11 - 9 in the fifth against Nils. However Nils fully deserved his win. I have

DIV 5 LEADING AVERAGES

Player	Team	P	W	%
Jean-Noel Thepaut	Kingfisher 'K'	27	27	100
John Burke	Springfield 'B'	30	27	90
Bob Winter	Tilehurst Meths 'C'	39	35	89.74
Catherine Venning	Tilehurst Meths 'C'	33	28	84.85
Oliver Bonser	Milestone 'B'	39	31	79.49
Siad Cole	OLOP 'I'	27	21	77.78
Nils Wedi	Kingfisher 'K'	24	18	75
Ted Cripps	Post Office 'B'	27	20	74.07
Mac de Guzman	OLOP 'I'	21	15	71.43
Duncan Abbott	Birch Copse 'B'	33	22	66.67
Mick Grantham	Post Office 'B'	27	18	66.67
Tony House	Sonning C&P 'E'	18	12	66.67

rarely come up against a player with such quick reflexes and he handled almost every attacking shot I threw at him with supreme skill. Andras beat fellow Hungarian Gabor and a new doubles partnership seems to have been unearthed with Andras and Melanie beating Nils and Gabor in 3-straight. This doubles partnership were also triumphant against Post Office 'B'. In this match Duncan's win over Ted and wins from Duncan, Andras and Melanie over Barbara secured a share of the spoils.

It's taken a long time, but **Tidmarsh 'E'** have finally hit the form I was expecting from them. After a 7 - 3 defeat by Springfield 'B', where Bob Sunerton, Steve Andrews and John Harland scored one apiece, their fortunes changed in the match against Sonning Common & Peppard 'E'. Two wins apiece for Steve & John and a doubles win would have given them a draw, but Dave's win by default against Phil gave the team its first win of the season. That soon became two wins as they took Milestone 'B' apart 7 - 3 thanks to braces from Steve, John & Bob and another doubles success.

Finally a creditable 5 - 5 draw was gained against OLOP 'I'. Bob scored a brace and Dave and Mike Bundy chipped in with one win apiece.

For Kingfisher 'J' it's been a bad start to the new year with five defeats on the bounce. The first of those was 2 - 8 against Springfield 'B', Andrew beating Chris and Dan. Andrew also beat Dave in the 9 - 1 defeat against Tilehurst Methodists 'C'. Against Kingfisher 'K' both Phil Cunnington and Gill Bennett beat Stuart in an 8 - 2 reverse. They were very close to a result at Post Office 'B' going down 6 - 4. Phil won twice beating Barbara and recording an impressive win over Mick, whilst Derek and Helen both beat Barbara. Phil, Derek and Helen recorded one win apiece in the week 20 match at Milestone 'B', going down 7 - 3.

Thanks again to all team captains for getting scorecards to me in good time and keeping me informed of difficulties. Just one thing though – can all team captains please make sure the identities of the doubles players are shown clearly on the scorecard.

Titanic tussles

This used to be known as five-set thrillers until it was pointed out to me that this term was technically incorrect. So I've changed the title to Titanic tussles in recognition of the 100th Anniversary of that vessel's maiden (and final) voyage.

Duncan Abbott (Birch Copse 'B') v Nils Wedi (Kingfisher 'K') 12-14,11-8,6-11,13-11,9-11.

Mal Collis (Tilehurst Meths 'C') v Chris Speight (Springfield 'B') 11-6,2-11,8-11,11-5,11-13.

John Simpson (Milestone 'B') v Dave Aust (SC&P 'E') 9-11,12-10,10-12,13-11,12-10.

Gerard Thorp (Milestone 'B') v Steve Andrews (Tidmarsh 'E') 10-12,10-12,11-5,11-8,10-12.

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

DIVISIONS 5-6 KNOCKOUT CUP 2011-2012

The semi-finals of this competition are due to be played this week :

Post Office 'B' v Birch Copse 'A'

Milestone 'B' v Kingfisher 'K'

Clearly Div 5 leaders Kingfisher 'K' have to be favourites to win this competition, but in a one-off clash anything can happen.

Duncan Abbott

Pool A

W) Post Office 'B'	11
2 OLOP 'J'	10
3 Tidmarsh 'E'	6

Pool B

W) Kingfisher 'K'	20
2 OLOP 'I'	9
3 SC&P 'F'	7
4 Milestone 'C'***	0

Pool C

W) Birch Copse 'B'	22
2 SC&P 'E'	22
3 Sonning Sports 'B'	6
4 Springfield 'C'	4

Pool D

W) Milestone 'B'	26
2 Kingfisher 'J'	16
3 Springfield 'D'	9
4 Birch Copse 'C'	3

Matches w/c 24 October

Tidmarsh E **2** Post Office B **7**
 Kingfisher K **7** v OLOP I **2**
 SC&P F v Milestone C P/P
 SC&P E **9** Springfield C **0**
 Sonning Sports B **0** Birch Copse B **9**
 Milestone B **9** Kingfisher J **0**
 Birch Copse C **3** Springfield D **6**

Matches w/c 21 November

Post Office B **4** OLOP J **5**
 OLOP I **7** SC&P F **2**
 Milestone C **0** Kingfisher K **9**
 Springfield C **4** Sonning Sports B **5**
 Birch Copse B **4** v SC&P E **5**
 Kingfisher J **9** Birch Copse C **0**
 Springfield D **1** v Milestone B **8**

Matches w/c 12 December

OLOP J **5** Tidmarsh E **4**
 Kingfisher K **4** SC&P F **5**
 OLOP I v Milestone C
 SC&P E **8** Sonning Sports B **1**
 Springfield C **0** Birch Copse B **9**
 Milestone B **9** Birch Copse C **0**
 Kingfisher J **7** Springfield D **2**

DIVISION SIX *by Nigel Rowland*

We are now on the home stretch with six games to go. Following their charge up the table OLOP 'J' are just hanging onto top spot, it looks like the pressure is starting to tell with draws in their last two games. Birch Copse 'C', Polish 'D' and Tilehurst Methodists 'D' are all within striking distance, teams with experienced players will have the edge towards the end of the season.

Congratulations go to OLOP 'J' taking Birch Copse 'C's 100% doubles record.

At the other end of the table Sonning Sports 'B' still reside as the basement club having not picked up a point since November. Then come Milestone 'C' and Springfield 'D'. Springfield 'C', SC&P 'F' and BBC have pulled away from the bottom of the table having put together a string of matches resulting in points.

On an individual basis I should like to congratulate Roy Hull and Reza Amini who currently reside at the top of the individual table.

Please can I ask you to keep e-mailing scorecards to rowland53@hotmail.com.

OLOP 'J' have moved into top spot with two wins and more recently two draws. They had a close 6 - 4 win over Milestone 'C', Joshua with another fine maximum, with two for Nigel and a single for Kamran. They then demolished a weakened Birch Copse 'C' 10 - 0 with trebles from **Joshua**, Nigel and a first game and treble for Chris. They then followed up with a

draw against a determined SC&P 'F', Joshua and Kamran getting two but both just losing to Danny Dockree in five set thrillers. Chris was brought down to earth in this game but still got the vital win over Albert Shephard. Another draw against promotion contenders Polish 'D', Joshua scored a hard fought treble in particular to come from two sets down to win against Jakub Langowski. Nigel got a vital double. Kamran had a five set thriller with Szymon Kubinski but just lost out 10-12 in the fifth. Joshua Gallen 34/39 including 8 trebles, Kamran Samdani 21/33 including 4 trebles, Lorcan Gallen 1/6,

Team	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
OLOP 'J'	13	8	3	2	86	44	19
Birch Copse 'C'	13	8	2	3	74	56	18
Polish 'D'	11	7	3	1	70	40	17
Tilehurst Meths 'D'	12	7	2	3	62	58	16
BBC Club	12	5	3	4	64	56	13
Springfield 'D'	13	5	1	7	61	69	11
Sonning C&P 'F'	11	4	2	5	53	57	10
Springfield 'C'	14	2	3	9	52	88	7
Milestone 'C'	10	2	2	6	44	56	6
Sonning Sports 'B'	11	1	1	9	34	76	3

Sonia Gallen 0/12, Nigel Antell 17/21 including 3 trebles, Chris Bunn 4/6 including 1 treble. Doubles 9/13.

Birch Copse 'C' remain in second spot, Roy remains the main driving force behind the team. They just lost out 4 - 6 in a tight game against BBC, Roy with a treble and a Roy and Elizabeth doubles win. Jason just lost out in a five set thriller against Dave Pearson and Elizabeth against Jack Mitchell. Then came a 0 - 10 collapse against OLOP 'J', Elizabeth and Trevor managed to win sets and Paula would have wished for an easier first outing of the season. They returned to winning ways against Sonning Sports 'B' 7 - 3, Roy with a three-straight treble, Elizabeth with a well earned single beating Dave West 12-10 in the fifth. Chris got his first double of the season and Elizabeth and Chris won the doubles. They then went one better defeating Springfield 'D' 8 - 2, Roy with another treble and doubles from Chris and Trevor, a first for Trevor. Roy Hull 35/36 including 11 trebles, Andras Ardanhazi 15/21 including 2 trebles, Chris Dummett 5/15, Elizabeth Hull 4/24, Trevor Stanter 3/15, Jason Taylor 0/3, Paula Smith 0/3. Doubles 12/13.

Polish 'D' slip to third spot but have games in hand so can still achieve a promotion spot. They defeated Springfield 'C' 7 - 3 thanks to an Alexandr treble, double from Szymon S and single from a first game of the



JOSHUA GALLEN OF OLOP 'J'

season for Eddy. The points were shared in the top of the table clash against OLOP 'J', Jakub getting a double with singles from Szymon S and Szymon K. Szymon K recorded a hard fought five set win over Kamran Samdini. Szymon S and Jakub paired up to win a five setter over Kamran Samdini and Nigel Antell. Szymon Szor 13/23 including 1 treble, Piotr Wilczak 7/11 including 1 treble, Grzegorz Romek 9/15, Maciej Sianos 7/11 including 1 treble, Alexandr Mikalcivc 9/9 including 3 trebles, Szymon Kubinski 5/11 including 1 treble, Jakub Langowski 13/18, Eddy Holweger 1/3. Doubles 6/11.

Tilehurst Methodists 'D' have put together a run of three straight wins to keep pace with the leaders. They just defeated basement club Sonning Sports 'B' 6 - 4, Patrick recording a treble including a five set win over Tom Gordon coming back from two sets down. Tim and Ryan supported with one win apiece. Patrick and Tim won a close five set doubles over Ken Stevens and Dave West to secure the points. Then they recorded a good 7-3 win over Springfield 'D', Patrick recording another treble with Tim a double and Chas a single. Once again Patrick and Tim paired to record another doubles win. Then came another 7 - 3 win over Springfield 'C', Patrick getting a three straight treble and Tim a treble including a close five set win over Adam Sheen. Once again Patrick and Tim recorded another doubles win. Patrick O'Sullivan 30/36 including 8 trebles, Tim Kendall 13/27 including 2 trebles, Chas Dean 8/27, Ryan Arch 3/12. Doubles 8/12.

BBC Caversham have shown a recent return to form with two wins and a draw. They had a great 6 - 4 win over promotion contenders Birch Copse 'B' thanks to doubles from Jack, Dave and Gordon. Jack had a good win over Elizabeth Hull coming from 2 - 1 down to win in five. Dave also had a close five set win over Jason Taylor. Then came a hard fought 9 - 1 win over SC&P 'F', Kyrill recording a brilliant treble including five set wins over Mikey Legg and Danny Dockree, coming from two sets down to win 11-5, 17-15, 16-14 against Danny Dockree. Reza recorded a three straight treble. Dave got a double including a hard fought five set win over Mikey Legg. Then followed a draw against Springfield 'C', Reza getting another three straight treble with John a single. Reza and John teamed up to record an important doubles win. Reza Amini 14/15 including 4 trebles, Kyrill Dissanayke 9/12 including 2 trebles, John Lancashire 3/9, Phil Peat 3/9, Dave Pearson 12/18, Gordon Ayres 4/18, John Scott 9/12, Jack Mitchell 4/12. Doubles 6/12.

Springfield 'D' started like an express train after

Christmas but soon ran out of steam. They recorded two straight wins, firstly, defeating basement Sonning Sports 'B' 8 - 2 thanks to a treble from David and braces from Alan and Bob along with a rare doubles win. Then came another 8 - 2 win over rivals Springfield 'C', Alan and David recording trebles along with a Bob double. Then their boiler ran out of steam losing 3 - 7 to Tilehurst Methodist 'D', Bob with a double and Tom with a single. Another 2 - 8 loss resulted against promotion contenders Birch Copse 'C', Alan spared the blushes with a well earned double. Alan Gould 18/35 including 1 treble, Bob Sibun 17/27, David French 13/20 including 3 trebles, Peter Greatorex 0/3, Derek Edney 3/17, Tom Berryman 2/12. Doubles 5/13.

SC&P 'F' continue to get points on the board with a win, draw and loss. In the game against BBC they suffered a heavy 1 - 9 loss, Danny getting the only win of the evening. Then followed what must be one of their best performances of the season drawing with top of the table OLOP 'J'. Danny hit a superb treble with Michael getting an important single beating Chris Bunn in the last game of the evening to grab a draw. Albert came close to getting the win for them but succumbed 9-11, 17-19, 13-15 in his game against Josh Gallen. Michael and Danny also secured a rare doubles win. Buoyed with confidence they then went one better defeating Springfield 'C' 7 - 3 thanks to Danny and **Ka Lo** trebles and another doubles win. Steve



KA LO CHIU OF SC&P 'F', IN ACTION AT THE READING CLOSED

just missed out on a win losing to Colin Jones 12-10, 10-12, 11-13, 6-11. Steve Knott 2/18, Michael Legg 13/28 including 2 trebles, Danny Dockree 15/25 including 2 trebles, Richard Legg 1/2. Albert Shephard 1/6, Ka Lo Chiu 10/14 including 2 trebles. Doubles 5/11.

LEADING AVERAGES

Player	Team	P	W	%
Roy Hull	Birch Copse 'C'	36	35	97.22
Reza Amini	BBC Club	15	14	93.33
John Evans	Milestone 'C'	27	24	88.89
Joshua Gallen	OLOP 'J'	39	34	87.18
Patrick O Sullivan	Tilehurst Meths 'D'	36	30	83.33
Nigel Antell	OLOP 'J'	21	17	80.95
Kyrill Dissanayke	BBC Club	12	9	75
John Scott	BBC Club	12	9	75
Jakub Langowski	Polish 'D'	18	13	72.22
Andras Ardanhazi	Birch Copse 'C'	21	15	71.43
Ka Lo Chui	Sonning C&P 'F'	14	10	71.43
David Pearson	BBC Club	18	12	66.67
David French	Springfield 'D'	20	13	65
Kamran Samdani	OLOP 'J'	33	21	63.64
Bob Siburn	Springfield 'D'	27	17	62.96
Pratik Kothan	Milestone 'C'	21	13	61.9

Springfield 'C' have recorded one point since Christmas, that was a very respectable draw with BBC. Both Ashley and Colin recorded doubles with Nigel an important single. In the local derby against Springfield 'D' they took a heavy 2 - 8 loss, Adam saving their blushes along with a rare doubles victory. They suffered three 3 - 7 defeats, firstly against Polish 'D' Colin recording a double with Adam a single. Then with the same score line they lost to Tilehurst Methodists 'D', Colin, Adam and Nigel all recording singles. Also with the same score line they lost to SC&P 'F', Colin, Ashley and Adam all recording singles. Colin Jones 24/42 including 3 trebles, Tim Carr 4/15, Ashley Jones 7/15, Nigel Outhwaite 8/33, Adam Sheen 5/21. Doubles

4/14.

Milestone 'C' have not had much luck since Christmas. As a result of player injuries they have not been able to field a team. The committee have been talking to their secretary Gerard Thorpe and captain Santaram in order to try and help with their situation. We wish your players a swift recovery. In the only game they have been able to play they almost pulled off a shock just losing to top of the table OLOP 'J' 4 - 6. John recorded a hard fought double with Pratik a single along with a good doubles win to stop a run of OLOP 'J' doubles wins stretching back to September. John Evans 24/27 including 6 trebles, Pratik Kothan 13/21 including 2 trebles, Sean Samashee 2/27, Santaram Samashee 1/12. Doubles 4/10.

Sonning Sports 'B' have not scored a point since November. That does not take away their determination and spirit. They lost 2 - 8 against Springfield 'D' despite six games going over three sets. Tom and Derek got one apiece with Dave just losing out in a five setter with Alan Gould. Tom and Derek just lost out in a five set thriller in the doubles against Alan Gould and David French. They then gave Tilehurst Methodists 'D' a scare just losing out 4 - 6, once again five games went over three sets. Ken got a good double with Dave and Tom getting one apiece. Tom had a five set thriller but just lost out against Patrick O'Sullivan. They lost 3 - 7 against promotion contenders Birch Copse 'C' once again six games went over three sets. Ken Stevens got a double with Sue a single. Dave just lost out in a five set thriller against Elizabeth Hull. Suzanne Brownhill 5/18, Dave West 5/27, Derek Somerville 4/9, Tom Gordon 11/24 including 1 treble, Ken Stevens 8/21. Doubles 1/11.

John Cunningham Youth Division

by Steve Ricks

Before I start this round-up it's appropriate to acknowledge the total commitment given to the Youth League by Alan Dines whom we sadly lost at the beginning of the year. Alan gave so much of his time to the youngsters over the past 40-odd years (myself included) and will be sorely missed..

The John Cunningham Youth League has now been split into two divisions which should make the matches a bit closer.

Top of the pile at the moment are **OLOP Attackers**. Siad Cole has yet to lose so far with 10 wins from 10 starts. Phil Saunders was also on 100% until the last match of this session when he came up against Danny Dockree in top form. After a tight set Danny came out on top 12-10 in the decider. In the same match, Jon Abbott pushed Siad all the way, eventually losing out 14-16, 11-9, 6-11. Michael McAllister was also unlucky against Jon, losing 10-12 in the decider. Attackers are definitely the team to beat at the moment being unbeaten and



owning 2 out of the top 3 players in the averages.

SCP Tigers are in second place though they have played a game more than those around them. Jon Abbott, Danny Dockree and Max Sweetman are all winning games and contributing to the cause, but are struggling a bit when it matters. Max started this half on fire and was still on 100% after 3 matches, however his form fell away and he is now struggling for some consistency. Jon can beat anybody in the division on his day and currently has the team's top average of 75%. Danny is on 69% with 11 out of 16 starts and showed what he is capable of by recently taking Phil Saunders' 100 %.

OLOP Trojans are currently third, but have improved their position over the past few weeks having been in the bottom two for the first few weeks of the league. Sam Ricks is still unbeaten with 6 wins from 6 starts without dropping an end. Sam Liu is providing excellent support, weighing in with 6 from 9. Saif is still looking for his first win but continues to improve and has been close to break-

DIV 1 TABLE

Team	P	W	L	D	F	A	Pts
OLOP Attackers	5	5	0	0	40	9	10
SCP Tigers	6	4	1	1	39	21	9
OLOP Trojans	5	2	2	1	26	23	5
OLOP Strikers	6	2	4	0	27	31	4
Kingfisher Knights	5	2	3	0	20	30	4
OLOP Avengers	5	0	5	0	5	43	0

ing his duck on a couple of occasions.

OLOP Strikers are fourth, but more than any other team, are suffering from only having two players. Gus Thomis and Chris Johnson are both good enough to get by on their own against the lower teams, however they will never challenge for the top whilst they are giving the top teams a 3 – 0 start. Gus has won 9 and Chris 10 from their 16 starts which equates to 56% and 63% respectively. A quick glance down the results shows that they were unlucky to play Trojans when Sam Ricks was available or they would probably have won and been in third place as a result.

Kingfisher Knights have a large squad of 7 players, so never concede games, so their success should depend on team selection for crucial games. This however, doesn't seem to be the case as they are all roughly of a similar standard. Tom Snape, Gideon Lewis, Isaac Farnworth, Tim Kenyon and David Fifield have all won 33% of their games, Alex Leeming is on 20% and Joe Barraclough is still looking for his first win. The disadvantage of having a large squad is that with less opportunity for each player to play they will enjoy less match practice so the club may be better splitting the players and fielding two teams next year.

Finally come **OLOP Avengers** who started off the season as a 3-man team but unfortunately are now down to one regular, meaning that Jim McAllister is really up against it and unlikely to achieve anything other than personal success until replacements are found. Jim has currently won 2 out of 8 starts.

With only four teams in Division 2, who have so far all beaten each other, this league is up for grabs and is very difficult to predict. As usual with the Youth League it will probably come down to who puts out a full side most consistently. The four-team format means that the teams will all play each other three times.

Currently sitting on top are **OLOP Eagles** though they have played a game more than their nearest rivals. They show the benefit of having a 3-man team all of whom are

DIV 1 AVERAGES

	P	W	%
S Cole	10	10	100
S Ricks	6	6	100
P Saunders	12	11	92
J Abbott	16	12	75
D Dockree	16	11	69
S Liu	9	6	67

capable of winning a few. Young Jamie Liu tops the averages for this team being on 73% with 8 wins from 11 starts; how good will he be when he can see over the top of the table? 😊 James Bridger has won 3 from 7 and Jamie Filby 1 from 6. In the match against Raiders the doubles was to prove crucial - the two Jamie's, Liu and Filby triumphing over Adam and Liam.

In second place are **SCP Spartans**. Richard Lego has had 8 starts and has only been beaten once, by top-of-the-averages man Adam Fearnside. Daniel Jordan has won his fair share as well weighing in with 36%, having won 4 out of 11 starts. They have been fortunate that when the matches have been tight, Daniel has provided backup to Richard so that they have won by the odd game. The exception to this was the match against Lions who were a 3 man team. This meant that they immediately conceded 3; Richard won all 3 for a maximum, Daniel won 1, but for some reason they didn't get round to playing the doubles which could have given them a draw – they lost 4 – 5.

SCP Raiders are in third spot, but still in touch with the leaders, having also played a game less. Adam Fearnside has yet to be beaten with 8 wins, supported by Liam Ruiz who has won 3 of his 8 starts. In theory Raiders could be in a strong position as they have already played top team Spartans twice. It was interesting that Adam, having won the battle of the two giants in the division against Richard, Adam's Raiders team subsequently lost the match by the odd set 5 – 4.

In fourth place currently are **OLOP Lions**. Keiran Morfill is their mainstay having won 8 out of 13, but he currently has limited support. Austin Ellerton got off to a bad start, but has won a couple of games in the last 2 weeks so his fortunes and those of the team may be on the up. Haasin Khan is finding the going tough at the moment, but did win his first game in the match preceding this write-up. He will improve with practice and will soon start to contribute on a more regular basis.

DIV 2 AVERAGES

	P	W	%
A Fearnside	8	8	100
R Lego	9	8	89
J Liu	11	8	73

DIV 2 TABLE

Team	P	W	L	D	F	A	Pts
OLOP Eagles	6	4	1	1	32	22	9
Sonning Spartans	5	3	2	0	21	23	6
SCP Raiders	5	2	3	0	21	22	4
OLOP Lions	6	1	4	1	25	32	3

MORE YOUTH HIGHLIGHTS

OLOP Juniors amongst British Elite

It is rare for any of the Reading & District clubs to be represented in the élite Premier Division at national level. This honour was won by Our Lady of Peace TTC Junior team this season through their promotion from Division 1 of the Junior British League last term. With Daniel Moses too old to qualify, two new juniors were recruited - Danny Lawrence (14) and Michael Ho from Cippenham. But nobody had played at Premier level before.



LIAM McTIERNAN, MILES CHAN, DANNY LAWRENCE & MICHAEL HO

In October the young players headed up to Tipton with manager Adam McTiernan and coach Bradley King, and performed with honour - not outright winners but still undefeated.

As a result of four draws and a win, OLOP amassed six points to finish third out of eight teams at the half way mark, just a single point off the joint leaders, Burton Uxbridge 1 and Ellenborough.

The winning match remarkably came against the favourites, BBATT 1, a team which consisted of three top-6-ranked English juniors. Great wins by Liam McTiernan (against Jarred Patel), Danny Lawrence (against Sam Mabey) and Michael Ho (over both Patel and Mabey) secured a confidence-boosting four-sets-to-two win.

The second weekend took place at Wolverhampton in mid February and OLOP continued where they left off at Tipton, this time coming back from 3 - 1 down against an Ellenborough side fielding a player with the best average in the Division - Hungarian Zsolt Szarka.

The second win of the campaign came against an even younger Ormsby team by five sets to one, with Danny and Michael each winning a brace. After all eight sides had played each other once, OLOP were one of the top four teams within a single point of each other.

A battling 3 - 3 draw against a very strong Burton Uxbridge 1 team followed - then a calamity just before the end, in which Danny lost a 2-1 lead against Tyrone Wells, and left OLOP with its seventh draw in nine matches!

So near yet so far! OLOP now needed to win against Ellenborough and had to hope Burton Uxbridge 1 beat BBATT 1. That happened easily enough, so all eyes were on the OLOP vs Ellenborough match.

A win for either team and they would be crowned champions, a draw and Burton were champions. Unfortunately in his heroic performance against BBATT, Michael Ho managed to crash into the umpire's table and badly damaged his knee. Therefore OLOP were forced to field their number four Miles Chan in this crucial encounter. To his great credit though he turned out to be the team's best player, winning one set and very nearly another.

However Liam and Danny found the going tough against the Hungarian, and in a vital encounter, Liam lost to eighteen year old Bradley Tuttle, whom he had beaten only the day before. This resulted in the first loss of the year for the team and handed a talented Ellenborough team the title in the most dramatic and closest Premium Division title race for many years. The result also left OLOP in fourth place overall. Although slightly disappointing it was still a marvellous achievement to come so close by a young and inexperienced squad averaging only fifteen years old.

Sam Liu wins Alan Dines Memorial Handicap Cup

During the half term break, the John Cunningham Reading Youth League ran a special individual handicap tournament at Blue Coat School in memory of the late great Alan Dines. Most of the twelve players who took part have been coached by Alan in the past.

After the group stages, the competition really hotted up in the quarter finals. The lowest handicapped player, Jon Abbott (-6), lost to his Sonning Common teammate Danny Dockree (-3) by two games to nil. Eight year old Jamie Liu (+2) recorded a surprise two-nil win over Chris Johnson (-2), whilst Gus Thomis (-3) defeated Reading Senior League player Siad Cole (-5) and Sam Liu (+0) comfortably beat the highest handicapped player Saif Maher (+5).

In the semi finals, thirteen year old Dockree just had too much experience for young Jamie Liu, overcoming a five point handicap and beating him in straight games.

However Jamie's older brother Sam got the better of Gus in three close games.

Starting with a 4 point advantage, Sam Liu quickly found himself one up in the final. However Dockree fought hard in the next game to eventually level at one game all. Liu was not to be denied his first ever tournament triumph though and reeled off a number of ferocious forehand winners to which a retreating Dockree simply had no answers. The final score was 3-1 to Liu and the deserving victor took the winner's trophy home.



DANNY DOCKREE AND SAM LIU