

The Wirral Horn

NEWSLETTER OF THE WIRRAL TABLE TENNIS LEAGUE

Editor :- Stan Wilkinson

March 1986

Coming to the end of the season now, looking towards end of season events like PRESENTATION DANCE which looks likely to be on 16th. May at Capenhurst all being well, will have full details next issue, also the league A.G.M.

There is talk of setting up a summer league to be played at H.Q. or alternatively some sort of competition run on certain nights through the closed season, could be quite pleasant in the park of a summer evening, have a talk with Fred Hepple or Phil Dean if you have any ideas,

The one big problem we know has to be resolved is the heating in the pavillion, i'm sure we can overcome this with a bit of help (financial) either from the Council or by ourselves, then we have got premises which are the envy of leagues all over the country, once the playing season is over we will set aside one night per week for running repairs, there is still a lot of work to be done to make the place more pleasant, the basics have been done by our small band of worthies last year, but painting etc, would improve the look of the place no end.

Events planned at H.Q. in March include :-

- Mon 3rd - NALGO v CALDY RAFA semi.
- Wed 5th. - Marconi v Pinewood Bill Lowe.
- Thurs 6th. H.Q. night.
- Fri 14th. Wirral Juniors 'A' v Preston 'A' also Wirral 'C' v Mid-Cheshire.
- Sun 16th. Wirral Juniors v Blackpool 2p.m.
- Fri 21st 2 Rep matches but I don't know which two.

Handbook amendment (bit late now) sorry Sid Cumine new Tel. No is 638 1721.
Thompson & Ross.

I have had to leave some reports out this time I had too much copy - great !

Prior to this game it seemed that Civic's fortunes had really turned the corner. Two well deserved wins on the trot, their first of the season, over Boys Brigade 2 and Oxtou 2, 15 points in the bag and happy faces all round.

Then down to earth again with this defeat by a useful Marconi side played in the sub - zero temperature at the H.Q. Arrol Park. This was despite Civic taking the lead with Rob's good win over Ron Williams in 2 straight games and involving a come - back from 5 - 10 down in the first game to a 21 - 14 win.

Chris as usual gave everything he had and, despite having mislaid his pumps, plugged away doggedly against veteran Laurie Morris. Experience gave the home player a decisive edge however and steady play coupled with good forehand drives won him the set.

At half time the score was 4 - 1 to Marconi, but with a little better luck Civic might well have the lead at this point, Susi losing in 3 to Alan Storey and Peter L. giving Morris a good run for his money. Highspot of the evening was the break for a cuppa which enabled frozen limbs (especially those belonging to non-playing spectators) to be thawed out in the kitchen, the warmest room in the place.

The second half did little to help Civic's cause - five further wins for the home side all achieved in 2 straight. The second doubles saw the combination of the two Peters (big P and little P) pitted against Storey and Morris. clever attempts by little P. to baffle and thwart their opponents by innocently continuing to serve after the allotted 5 services and forgetting to change round from time to time didn't work and the result was a straight games win 21-7 21-8.

Man of the match everyone for lasting out on the coldest night of the year. AWL.

THE WIRRAL CLOSED TOURNAMENT 1986

on

As you all should know the Tournament was held at Grange Road on Sunday 23rd. Feb. A slightly smaller entry for this years event, but good to see so many juniors enter, hope to see them all again at the Cheshire Open event next month.

The Mens singles was , for the first round divided into groups as usual 23 in this case i.e. 69 entrants, not a lot when you think of the size of the league, anyway from these groups emerged our 23 worthies to contest the first round proper :

N Royden	B Wentworth	P Birken	A Evans	P Luxon
S Deeble	A Timewell	M Bowen	M Tierney	J Hardy
Clayes	B Murphy	D Parr	A Barbat	M McEvoy.
R Butler	N Kirsopp	D Roberts	R Smith	
G Kirsopp	N Rafferty	S Green	R Bevan	

By the quarter finals we were left with Last years Champion Neil Royden and

Bernie Wentworth,	Steve Green	Malc McEvoy
Alan Timewell	Roy Smith	
Dave Roberts	Rob Bevan	

From then on it was anybody's title, I think every game was a struggle, Neil had a hard time getting past Bernie in the quarters , Rob maybe had the hardest run on paper having to beat Phil Luxon, Malc McEvoy, Steve Green to meet Neil in the final Alan did well to beat Dave only to go out to Neil in the semi, after all this it was left to Rob & Neil to fight it out in the final which Neil won and retained his title for another year.

Our ever faithful Ladies turned up once again to do battle, some of the younger players now beginning to make their way, but it was left to Debbie Bevan and Mabel Neary to fight it out in the final which Debbie won but it wasn't easy against a feisty opponent.

The Junior Boys again was a hard fought contest, the matches I saw were very impressive, but it was left to :- P Birken - N Rafferty

R McDonald - N Kirsopp to play out the Semis

Which left Nigel and Neil in the final - which the Pinewood player Nigel won.

The Mens Doubles finalists were Steve Green & Neil Royden v Malc McEvoy & Rob Bevan

Steve & Neil eventually winning the title.

The Junior Girls title was a three way gamble - Sharon winning the event from Belinda & Susi.

DIVISION ONE

	P	W	D	L	PTS
CALDY	16	14	0	2	113
CIVIC 2	14	13	1	0	108
NBCS 3	14	9	2	3	88
ALDERLEY	15	8	2	5	87
NALGO	16	7	2	7	80
UPTON VH	15	8	0	7	71
PINEWOOD 2	16	3	5	8	66
NESTON	13	5	0	8	55
WRUFC	15	2	2	11	53
WALL MAN 2	13	2	1	10	45
CALDY 2	13	1	1	11	34

DIVISION TWO

CALDY 3	16	13	3	0	108
ALDERLEY 2	16	9	4	3	98
CIVIC 3	16	9	5	2	96
OXTON	17	9	2	6	93
THINGWALL	14	9	2	3	87
NBCC 4	14	7	0	7	77
CALDY 4	16	6	2	8	76
ENG MART	16	5	4	7	73
ST PETERS	15	3	0	12	51
NESTON 2	16	0	3	13	51
NCLTC	16	3	1	12	50

DIVISION THREE

UPTON CC	15	13	1	1	116
ENG MART 2	16	8	4	4	91
WALL MAN3	16	8	2	6	88
PINEWOOD 3	13	10	0	3	81
WALL MANRUFC 2	15	6	3	6	73
GRPC	13	8	1	4	71
THINGWALL 2	14	5	2	7	70
MARCONI	15	7	1	7	70
CALDY 6	15	4	1	10	60
WALL FERR	15	1	5	9	58
CALDY 5	15	0	2	13	32

DIVISION FOUR

	P	W	D	L	PTS
PINEWOOD 4	14	12	2	0	110
ENG MART 3	14	10	1	3	92
NALGO 2	14	8	3	3	90
LIVINGSTONE ST	14	6	2	5	69
NESTON 3	12	6	2	4	66
OXTON 2	13	4	1	8	54
THOMP & ROSS	*1	6	0	5	54
UPTON CC 2	14	4	1	9	50
CALDY 7	14	2	2	10	46
CIVIC 4	14	1	2	11	39

DIVISION FIVE

OXTON 3	17	14	3	0	136
B.B.B.	17	11	3	3	117
BIRK L.R.	16	13	2	1	114
WALL FERR 2	17	11	0	6	105
NALGO 3	17	8	4	5	91
ENG MART 4	17	7	1	9	87
GRFC 2	17	6	3	8	83
MARCONI 2	16	7	4	5	81
NBCC 5	15	3	4	8	61
OXTON CC 4	17	3	2	12	48
CIVIC 5	15	2	0	13	34
B.B.B. 2	17	1	0	16	33

PREMIER

CIVIC	14	8	1	5	77
NBCC	9	8	0	1	68
PINEWOOD	12	6	0	6	56
WALL MAN	12	3	1	8	47
N 2	11	2	2	7	42

HEPPLE CUP Veterans - Organiser hoping to play the semi - finals
w/c 17th. March at the league H.Q.

Wallasey Manor v Civic B

English Martyrs v Civic A

ENGLISH CLOSED CHAMPIONSHIPS on fri. 7th. March - Sun. 9th. at the
OLDHAM SPORTS CENTRE tickets will be available at the door.

Wirral Closed cont.....

The Ladies Doubles event went to the youngsters Belinda & Sharon beating the 'oldies' Debbie & Marina in the final.

The contest for the Greenshield 'Shield' won by the champion Veteran, was again hard fought the line - up contained the donor himself, unfortunately meeting the ultimate winner in his first game Roy Smith, who succeeded over the nearly man of the day Alan (the chair) Timewell.

The Divisional events were poorly supported but were played with the usual keen ness the eventual winners were :-

1st. Div.	M Tierney	from A Biggs.
2nd Div.	V Franco	from J Horobin.
3rd Div.	P Mutch	from J Fuller.
4th. Div.	R Williams	from G Williams.
5th. Div.	M Deponio	from P Lam.

N.C.L.T.C. Not many THINGWALL A lot

Thingwall play in a big hall on a ropy old table and greyish balls. There are 3 exits to the hall from which they leave and re-appear at intervals bearing glasses of brown liquid. It must be good stuff as they win 10-0. only I enjoy myself with high looped returns against Art who, in a controlled display (no swearing) doggedly shovels the ball back with his amazing style, waiting for a kill. I win the 1st. game and make a big effort in the 2nd, to pull up to 18-19, then miss a hit (of course). and Art is in control from then. Against Don Juan, sorry Collister, I get to 19all in the first, when Don produces a winning serve off the edge. At 15 - 20 down in the second I serve to the forehand side which Don has vacated, but he darts across like a spring 'lambkin' to hit a winner, that brown liquid again. Before this game he had made history by scoring a game. Despite having some of the stuff Glyn & Cyril are not at their best, and Barbara on 'slimline' tonic is definately handicapped. Still Don did give her a rose, it was only a paper one, but it is the thought that counts.

Lambkin of the match - ART.

IMcC.

The Caldys 3 machine splatters on at the head of the 2nd. Div. looking ever more likely to blow a gasket as the season progresses. We're still winning games, but it's getting harder all the while.

Oxton are our first opponents of the month., injury-hit, their other team committed elsewhere, they arrive without a no. 4, giving us a 3-0 start. By the time we realise that we would almost certainly have won those games anyway, and so haven't actually gained anything, the scores are level. Peter Hurworth & Roy Tierney pick up a doubles against Phil & Ian, John is bamboozled by Don South's long pimples, and Mike gets chopped to a crushing defeat by Hurworth, 3-3 and a disastrous defeat looks more than possible.

Phil stops the rot by winning a spectacular set against Tierney in 3, but our problems aren't over yet. Hurworth beats John to level it 4-4, and Ian then faces South (I'll spare you the pun a la McCaig at this point). Like John, he hasn't a clue what his opponents' pimples are doing with the ball; unlike John, he doesn't care. He registers another triumph for the Genghis Khan school of table-tennis, 25-23 in the third, and says he never considered losing - meanwhile, his team-mates reach for the Valium bottle. Mike then takes advantage of a tiring Tierney to make the final score an acceptable 6-4.

So to Eng. Martyrs, and a match happily free from the accinary that marred our first encounter. John goes down in 3 to Joe Gallagher, and Ian loses one of his uglier games to Pat Doyle, and it's 1-2. Mike is drawn against two of his 'bogey' opponents, and when he lets Neil Parkinson in to steal the first game of the 4th. set, things begin to look dodgy. Fortunately, his opponent goes to sleep at the start of the second, and by the time he wakes up again in the third, Mike has adjusted his game to the slow table, and his high topspin returns eventually tilt the balance in his favour, he then stays on, and uses the same tactics to exploit Gallagher's lack of a hard hit and makes it 3-2.

Phil and Ian then get annihilated in their doubles by Parkinson & Gallagher, and when Phil fails to anaesthetise Parkinson in a long and dreadfully boring set, it's 4-4. Ian then produces his first win on a "Foreign" table since October, against Bill Gibbins, and John breaks his losing run with a stylish win against Doyle. (I've won again) but it's only 6-4 (again), and the chasing pack are closing....

The game at Civic the following week is now a real 20 pointer, and Ian chooses the Friday before this match to incur a suspected fracture in his toe. The skipper can't find a decent reserve, and tells Ian he will have to play. Meanwhile, Civic have problems of their own - Bill Stanley comes in for Val Franco, who has a Southport League fixture.

Phil puts us into the lead by somehow persuading Stanley to beat himself, but things then start to go wrong. Mike allows Mabel Neary to steal the first game of the next set, and gets outplayed in the second. Phil and Ian get wiped out in the third game of their doubles against Stanley & Frank Sorrentino. Worse, the skipper loses his other singles when Joan Monaghan finds a couple of useful serves at 18 all in the third. When Phil elects to play 'safe' and push, having used rather different tactics to take the first game off Mabel, he duly pays the penalty and

we're in real trouble at 1-4. Enter the cavalry, in the unlikely form of J.A.C.Horobin, arriving late from a prior engagement.

Ian helps to turn the tide by biffing Sorrentino smartly off the table in the 6th. set, but it's John who rescues our unbeaten record. After calmly pushing Joan off in a couple of tight games, he then picks up the doubles with Mike, in a particularly fraught affair with Mabel & Joan. The skipper's preference for the block repeatedly sets up kills for Joan Monaghan, and our 10-2 lead at the turn in the third game gets rapidly eroded. Following some rather animated advice from John, he manages his first chops of the season, and we get home 18. The last set of the night sees Sorrentino make it one game each after the second, and move into a substantial lead in the third. John just keeps pushing and chopping, and as his lead gets whittled away, you can almost see Frank reaching for the self-destruct button. Finally he presses it; 16-14 becomes 16-21, and we've escaped with a draw.

Our last game of the month sees us reshuffle our order, at home to Neston. John promises to chop John Reynolds off, so goes back up to No. 2. Ian's keen to avoid Ron Spence, and promises to beat Tony Reuben, so he plays at 3, Phil at 4. The juggling act works, and we win 9-1. Degree of motivation perhaps accounts for the margin of victory - we still have everything to play for, they don't.

Ian and John both keep their promises, the latter in a fascinating clash of styles against Reynolds. The Neston No. 1. uses a slow loop, and hits flat and hard (as Mike found out to his cost, for the second time this season). John chops his way to a narrow win in the first, and has set point in the second. This he loses with a foul shot (a double-hit) and goes on to lose the game also. In the third, he has 2 match points against him, and saves both, the second by magnificent defence against a series of Reynolds loops. With a bit of help from the net, he takes the game 22-20, and the set. The result gives us a 10 point cushion at the top of the table - a cushion we'll need in the four matches to come.

M.S.

Thanks to Bill Gibbins we are again getting reports in the WIRRAL NEWS. Anybody with extra suggestions for publication please point out when returning cards.

Note to Cup semi-finalists - please play your games as soon as possible, if in difficulty to refer to organiser for date & venue. Remember that all participants in semis and finals must have played 6 matches under the auspices of the Wirral League before the date of the match.

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NEWSLETTER OF THE WIRRAL TABLE TENNIS LEAGUE

Editor :- Stan Wilkinson.

April 1986.

As we come to the end of another season, we are left with a smattering of league matches, and various cup - finals to play, which seems to me to add up to a fairly satisfactory season which culminates with the two events which round up the season :- Firstly, the PRESENTATION DANCE to be held again by the help of our good friend Gordon Exell, at the -

E.C.R.C. Club at Capenhurst on Friday 16th. May from 7.30 - Mid-night. Dancing to the SKY - HIGH DISCO and refreshments will be available..

Tickets are available from Committee members at £2. please support the league in this the only social get together we hold during the season,

Likewise the A.G.M. of the league to be held on Monday 19th May at the LEAGUE HEADQUARTERS ARROWE PARK is important, on it will hinge the future of the H.Q. and the representative teams for the next playing season, please try to attend, we would like your support and ideas, it is a rule of the league that all CLUBS should be represented at this meeting, but we would like to see also anybody who has an interest in the affairs of the league there at the meeting at 7.30 pm.

Club Secretaries will be notified by letter in due course.

Final league tables and individual averages etc. will be available at the A.G.M.

All outstanding cards to be with the Fixture Sec by 14th. April.

CIVIC V - 3 GAUTBY RD II - 7

This match could well have been called the battle of the little giants. Average age, leaving out Gautby's captain Tony Whelligan, was probably round the 12 mark with an assortment of player sizes to match.

The first set went to Civic with a good win by Rob whose extra height and reach was a big factor in producing some big - hitting power play to overcome little Gary Allen.

A good comeback in the second set by Susi in her match against Keith Allison produced a series of fine rallies and hard won points for the Civic player but not quite enough to win the game. In both sets the Gautby Road player brought out some good defensive work to win vital points when they mattered most.

Much improved play by Peter W. enabled him to maintain the rally for each point for longer periods than in earlier matches, however against Neil Allen there had to be a limit to the height to which he could jump to play the high loops over the net which the other player produced and lack of inches proved to be a definite handicap in this respect.

By half time the score was 3 - 2 in the away teams favour, Susi and Rob winning their doubles set with the aid of a great comeback from 8 - 16 down in the first game to a 22 - 20 win.

The second half saw the Civic right back in the match when Peter L. made it 3 sets all in getting the better of Gary Allen in straight games, but the Gautby Rd player never gave up and the second game was extremely close at 9 all.

However subsequent sets all went the opposition's way including an excellent singles battle between Susi & Neil Allen. In an exciting game of fast attack and counter attack effective top spin drives finally won the set for a player whose standard of play would not be out of place in a higher division.

Man of the match - Neil Allen - Gautby Road.

WALLASEY FERRIES II 6 CIVIC V 4

Close on the heels of the Gautby Rd game came this one against a fairly highly placed in the table. Considering that the earlier season scoreline was a 10 - 0 victory for the Ferries this was an excellent result for Civic on an away table and the result indicates the progress made by the team in their first season.

Ferries' ornately lit room provides plenty of space and for anyone able to negotiate the concertina doors through to the adjacent bar without getting swallowed up and becoming part of the room, a decent pint of bitter was available together with the Joan Rivers show on the giant screen tele.

Long serving Ferries player Ken (started in 1949) Jones evidently knew the lighting required some modification as he wore an eyeshade throughout his games. This appeared to be a worthwhile addition to standard kit, as he

won both his games over Susi and Rob but not without a struggle from the Civic pair.

Greatly improved play by Chris enabled him to overcome Ferries Mark Frasher in 2 straight games and ended his recent lean run. Further wins by Peter L. over the same player, Rob over Mick Cooper and a excellent doubles victory by Susi & Rob over Wareing and Cooper 21 - 7 21 - 5 brought Civic a very respectable 4 sets.

DIARY OF A SEASON - MARCH.

Man of the match Ken Jones (but only just from Chris)

AWL.

DIARY OF A SEASON - MARCH.

So the season enters its home straight with Caldys 3 still leading Div. 2, but hotly pursued by three teams who still have an excellent chance of catching us. Alderley 2 have never been far behind all season, and a 10 - 0 win against Eng. Mart improves their prospects further. Thingwall are also a threat, having miraculously managed to sustain both their challenge, and Don Collis sustains throughout the winter. And of course, the biggest threat of all, if Frank Scorrentino can assemble his full-strength side, are Civic 3.

Off to New Brighton we go for our last match but three. John's form has improved so dramatically over the last couple of games that we decide to revert to our original start-of-season order, with him at 2, and Mike at 2. So Phil, back at 3 beats John Conway and Dave Evans to take his league % to 75. Against the latter in particular, he shows what a good player he can be when going for his shots-if only he would do so all the time. The value of his contribution has been largely overlooked in this 'Diary' - mainly because he usually wins in such a hum-drum manner. But we'll miss him in the next fortnight-he wins his doubles with Ian then rushes home for his annual skiing holiday in Val d'Iserre.

Meanwhile Mike suffers a mortifying defeat against Gary Abbott. Having just been edged out 19 in the first game, he hits a devastating spell in the second and leads 16 - 3 then 20 - 10. The next twelve points are played in an atmosphere of mounting incredulity, as he completely loses the thread, and Gary takes complete control, and the set, 22 - 20. So it's 50p in 'game point' fines for the skipper, and just as well there is no cyanide available.

John just manages to see off a tenacious Dave Evans after dropping the first game, but after coming back from 15- 20 to take the first against Abbott the NBCC man gets a 3 - 4 point cushion early on in both the next two games which he clings on to, for all John's effort.

John Conway is too steady for Ian, but Mike Muskett has a bad night, 1 to both Ian & Mike. He does improve however in his doubles with Abbott, in which John & Mike lose for only the third time in the league this season. So it's

DIVISION ONE

	P	W	D	L	PTS
CIVIC 2	20	19	1	0	156
Caldy	20	16	1	3	140
NBCC 3	20	10	6	4	116
ALDERLEY	20	10	3	7	115
UPTON V.H.	20	10	2	8	99
NALGO	20	8	4	8	97
PINEWOOD	20	4	5	11	77
NESTON	18	6	0	12	75
WALL RUFC	20	3	3	14	75
WALL MAN 2	17	3	2	12	60
CALDY 2	19	3	3	13	60

DIVISION TWO

CALDY 3	20	15	3	2	130
ALDERLEY 2	20	11	6	3	124
CIVIC 3	19	11	6	2	119
THINGWALL	18	12	3	3	113
OXTON	20	11	3	6	116
NBCC 4	19	8	2	9	100
CALDY 4	20	8	3	9	98
ENG MART.	20	5	5	10	80
ST PETERS	20	5	0	15	75
NESTON 2	18	0	4	14	59
NCLTC	20	3	1	16	56

DIVISION THREE

UPTON CC	18	15	2	1	133
ENG. MART 2	19	9	4	6	107
WALL MAN 3	19	11	2	6	107
PINEWOOD 3	17	13	0	4	106
WALL RUFC 2	19	8	4	7	98
GRFC	17	10	2	5	92
MARCONI	17	8	1	8	81
THINGWALL 2	19	5	2	11	81
CALDY 6	20	6	2	12	86
WALL FERR,	20	3	5	12	82
CALDY 5	19	0	2	17	41

DIVISION FOUR

	P	W	D	L	PTS
PINEWOOD 4	17	15	2	0	134
ENG. MART 3	18	13	1	4	118
NALGO 2	17	11	3	3	115
NESTON 3	17	9	2	6	92
LIVINGSTONE ST	17	6	2	9	76
OXTON 2	17	5	1	11	71
THOMP & ROSS	15	9	0	6	76
UPTON CC 2	18	5	1	12	66
CALDY 7	18	2	3	13	56
CIVIC 4	16	1	3	12	46

DIVISION FIVE

OXTON 3	22	18	3	1	166
BIRK. BB	22	16	3	3	166
BIRK. LR	22	17	2	3	152
WALL FERR "	21	14	0	7	130
NALGO 3	22	11	5	6	120
GRPC 2	21	7	4	10	104
ENG MART 4	21	8	2	11	103
NBCC 5	22	6	5	11	91
OXTON 4	21	3	2	16	52
CIVIC 5	21	2	0	19	48
BIRK. BB 2	21	1	0	20	44

PREMIER DIVISION

NBCC	14	13	0	1	108
CIVIC	14	8	1	5	77
PINEWOOD 2	13	6	1	6	61
NBCC 2	16	2	4	10	60
WALL MANOR	15	3	2	10	54

6 - 4 after a lot of effort, and now we have to face Alderley and Thingwall without Phil. We bring in the best available player, Phil Dean, and hope for the best.

Such hope seems ill-founded the following week, as we make a dreadful start against Alderley. Ian and Phil Dean get crushed by Paul Reed-Clayton & 'Sandy' Anderson. More critically, Alan Weldon susses out Mike's service very quickly and hustles him off in two straight - a set we had won in our first encounter. at 3 - 3 the whole season seems to hang in the balance as John battles it out with Paul Loftus. The first two games are won and lost with narrow margins; the third game fluctuates, and reaches 18 all, at which point John goes for a distinctly speculative smash, his luck's in - it wins the point, and Paul throws away the next two to give us the set. In such moments are leagues decided.....

Ian achieves the impossible by playing even worse than usual against Sandy. Once again it's John who keeps us in the match - his chop breaks up Paul R - C's attacking game. Phil Dean fights gallantly against Alan Weldon and his own inability to serve, but goes down 17 in the third to leave us in dire straits again at 2 - 5 - can we preserve our unbeaten record? The Stone - Loftus encounter is a question of whose bottle will go first, and the Alderley player is the one to crack, half-way through the third. 3 - 5.

The match still hangs in the balance as John & Mike just hold off Sandy & Paul R ? C. But Ian & Phil are well beaten, and our record finally goes - but then we could have lost this 9 - 1. Alderley come within 4 points of us; Thingwall gain lots of ground with big wins.

Next stop - Thingwall. The skipper rejects suggestions that we 'fiddle' in order to get a 5 - 5, reckoning that we can do better by being 'honest' and playing to win. He's wrong.

Thingwall have to win to keep up their challenge, while we can't afford anything worse than 4 - 6. A tense and dramatic encounter ensues though to be honest the standard of Table Tennis was awful.

We make another bad start. Ian outplays Bill Wonderley to stand a game and 6 - 12 up. but the latter grits his teeth and battles for every point to take the second and third games by the same margin 19. Phil gets bashed off in two straight by Arthur Lambkin in one of the few impressive performances of the night when John drops the first game to Andy Page the skipper starts to panic - but prematurely. John lures his opponent to self destruction, gradually persuading him to concentrate on the less reliable shots in his repertoire.

Mike then equalises in a ludicrous game against Don Collister. He does his best, in the first game, to emulate his feat against Gary Abott, going to 20 - 21 from 20 - 12, before winning 24 - 22. the second he loses narrowly, and he takes the set on his third set point at 22 - 20 having inflicted enough agony on his watching team - mates. 2 - 2.

Phil loses his way against Wonderley after getting a good start, but all credit to the Thingwall player for keeping his head and again battling his way to victory. The same can't be said for Lambkin, however. Having sorted Mike's serve out, and been unlucky to lose the first game 19, he loses his rag, and his concentration, when faced with a series of net-cords early in the second

Mike heeds John's sage advice 'Never look a thingy in the whatsit' (?) and takes full advantage.

Meanwhile Ian slumps to his 5th. consecutive defeat against Page, and John gets outplayed by Collister. Our second defeat is assured when we drop the second doubles, and John & Mike face another 'diarrhoea doubles' to aver a 7 - 3 result which would let Thingwall get too close. They save a set point in the second game (how much will Thingwall regret that, at the end of the season)?, and take the third in an awful game of push and prod.

So now our lead is cut to 8 points over Civic, 9 over Thingwall - and they both have a game in hand. Alderley's chances have been scuppered by a draw at Neston. For our last match, against St Peters we've simply got to set our rivals the biggest possible target for their remaining two games - but at least we've got Phil back.

Brian Carter, not for the first time this season, proves to be our stumbling block - he picks up both his singles, coming from a game behind against John & Mike. Fortunately, Ian recovers his form and wins well - especially against Glyn Owen. The final score is 8 - 2 giving us 130 points so, to overtake us, Civic need 17, from Caldy 4 & Neston; Thingwall 18, from Neston & New Broughton.

The rest of the evening is spent working out percentages, and average fining rates, for which Phil with 76%, and 17p per game, comes off by far the best, and Ian with 59½ and 36p per game, comes off by far the worst. The actual fine payable, we decide, is 100 times the average fining rate - this gives us a total of £104.83p to blow on our nights out.

All that's left then is painful waiting. It's been a very competitive League, and I've lost count of the number of 'cliff-hangers' we've been involved in over the last 6 months. Were we good enough to win the Division the next week or so will decide!

EPILOGUE - Caldy 4 5 - 5 Civic 3.
Civic 3 8 - 2 Neston 2. Neston 2 0 - 10 Thingwall.

So Civic have blown it. Thingwall play NBCCC on April 7th. after this is printed, and need 8 points to take the 2nd. Division title outright.

MKS.

BILL LOWE SHIELD SEMI FINALS

Neston 3 beat W.R.U.F.C. 2 by 10 points

Wall Ferries 2 beat Civic 4 by 13 points

LONSDALE CUP Final 8th. April at H.Q.

Civic v Pinewood.

R.A.F.A. CUP Final 9th. April at H.Q.

Civic 2 v Caldby.

Still trying to muster support for a Summer season at Arrowe Park please get in touch with Fred Hepple or Phil Dean if you have any ideas or support for the scheme. We will try to set this up at the A.G.M.

The various Representative teams have not yet fully completed their fixtures so the final tables Etc will not be available till the A.G.M.,

INDIVIDUAL HANDICAP TOURNAMENT

It is proposed to hold this at the ARROWE PARK H.Q. week commencing 28th April. The event will be run in groups from Mon 28th. - Thurs 1st. May each evening, you can state which evening you would prefer, the finals to be held on Friday 2nd. May.

Please phone your enrtty to Alan Tinewell on 339 3646.

There will be an enrtty fee of £1. and prize MONEY down to all Semi finalists.

The group system gaurantees everybody a number of games each night.