

# READING & DISTRICT

# TABLE TENNIS ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER



*December 2008*

Editor: Derek Wavell

# Happy Christmas 2008!

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*W*ishing the merriest of all Christmases to the good-hearted and steadfast table tennis players of Reading!

*Divisional battles* are taking a firm shape now, and each of our divisional secretaries has a different way of bringing them to life.

Eminent Reading sportsmen? Read [Syed by Syed](#)

You'll see we have another report on the planned Reading [Table Tennis Centre](#), which fortunately is still moving on even though the government decided not to fund table tennis as one of its top Olympic sports. I am told that this bad news mostly affects the country's very top players - not the likes of you and me.

[Smart 'Arry](#) is back. If you like to see trusting souls risk ritual humiliation at the hands of Smart 'Arry, turn to page 4. And maybe you'd even fancy a slice of ritual humiliation yourself, after all those mince pies? If so please email [smartarry@google-mail.com](mailto:smartarry@google-mail.com).

We are all living longer, it seems. Did you know we actually have three **eighty-year-olds** still playing in the league? For details, please see page 19. Maybe you can tell us of someone else too!

Which reminds me to thank all who have had bright ideas and sent in items for the Newsletter. E.g. (in this edition): Syed by Syed; the Anagram contest; the Fin Cup; Ask 'Arry, Letters to the Editor, the 80-year-olds, and the embarrassing action photo. Do send in more - via the [Newsletters page](#) of the RDTTA web site.

Have a glorious Christmas...

Derek



Reading has produced a great many top table tennis players - but two of the most exciting newcomers on the England scene in the mid 1980s were the Syed brothers, Andrew and Matthew. Here is the story in Andrew Syed's own words:

## Syed by Syed

Both Matthew and I loved sport and we managed to make the county squad in other racket sports (badminton and tennis), did judo and played football for our local team before taking up table tennis exclusively. We both started playing table tennis at primary school encouraged by Pete Charters, our primary school teacher. At the age of 10, I won my first tournament at my primary school. As my younger brother Matthew was slower than me on the table, Pete suggested he become a defender. My game could be described as attacking, close to the table, with a strong backhand counter attack but lacking in power as my build was slight. We both competed in the Reading Closed under 11 event and drew each other in the second round. I was certain that I would beat him but was distraught when I lost 21-18 in the third. However, this ensured I never took him lightly again and the following 19 times we played each other I was victorious. When I was 13, I managed to get 100% in the Reading league Division One much to the dismay of some of the older, more experienced players. After several months, we began to compete in tournaments which resulted in, by the age of 14, me becoming National under 14 champion.

I was selected for the European Youth championships in Malmö, Sweden in 1983 and attended one of the many training camps held in Lilleshall. Squad members included Des Douglas, Nicky Mason, Skylet Andrew, Graham Sandley, Phil Bradbury and Jimmy Stokes. Skylet had an incredible high toss serve, strong forehand loop but no backhand. Off the table, he was an amazing extrovert and is now an agent for some of the top footballers in the country. Carl Preat was unusual in both character and technique. He had an extraordinary knowledge of cricket and often entertained us with his near-perfect, impressions of cricket commentators. The England boys team for the European Youth Championships comprised Carl Preat, Alan Cooke, Nicky Mason, Jimmy Stokes and myself. We all felt a tremendous sense of camaraderie. I look back at this time with immense pleasure. Waldner beat Preat in the Junior singles and in the cadet event, Jimmy Stokes and I beat Yugoslavia to finish 5th. In the process, I beat Zoran Primorac who later was to become World Cup champion. After the tournament I reached No 10 in the European cadet rankings.

The following year was successful for me. I was in the England Junior squad in the European Youth Championships in Linz, Austria together with Carl Preat, Chris Bartram and Jimmy Stokes were we received a bronze medal. I became England National under 17 champion, won the Cotswold Select, Yorkshire Select and Cleveland Select and therefore amassed the most points in the Beneficial Trust Grand Prix together with Sue Collier. The reward was the chance to train with the Korean national team. I was used to training by this time but the Koreans pushed this to a new level. I remember the incredible heat and gruelling training schedules. I trained with Yu Nam Kyu, who later became

Olympic Men's champion and Yang Young Ya who was the world No 2 woman and Hyun Jung Hwa, World Champion. I have a vivid memory of Hyun. At dinner time, she would always get the coaches' food and say grace before eating. Like many of the team, she was a committed Christian and years later she and her husband became missionaries. Around 5 years ago, I went to a church meeting in London where Yang Young Ya was speaking and we were delighted to renew our acquaintance.

At the age of 17, which turned out to be my last year of competitive table tennis, I won the Middlesex Men's Open beating Nicky Mason in the final. This put me at England Senior No 6 after which my season was plagued with various injuries which eventually ended my career. However, on the way, I had some notable victories including Roskopf, Primorac and Gatien.

Matthew had an excellent record in the cadets and juniors, winning the national cadets twice and juniors once and a silver medal in the European cadet championships.

He became four times England champion, twice beating Alan Cooke and 3 times Commonwealth Champion. Matthew also proved that education and sport can go hand in hand and he gained a first class degree at Oxford in Politics, Philosophy and Economics. Since retiring from competitive table tennis Matthew has put down his bat and picked up his pen, becoming sports writer for the Times and this year winning the coveted Sports Feature Writer of the Year. He also commentates on table tennis, squash and snooker for the BBC and Eurosport as well as working for TTK, a charity which he helped set up, which now has 30 full time coaches. It concentrates on providing table tennis coaching and equipment for schools in deprived inner city areas.

From the above, the decision to go for table tennis we would both deem as one of our wiser choices in life. It proved to be an exciting ride.

*This article appeared in a longer form in Table Tennis News.*



# TABLE TENNIS CENTRE

## Bulletin by Brian Halliday

The Steering Group is delighted to welcome **Lisa Bosley** on board. Lisa has recently been appointed to the position of Regional Development Officer by the ETTA, after gaining a Sports Science degree at University, and is a very welcome addition. Project Leader **Peter Bradley** said “**Lisa is very well known in Reading League circles, and is back playing at the Kingfisher club. She will provide a direct link to the Head Office of the ETTA at Hastings which will help the project enormously.**”

Bulletin 1 stated that the plans are ambitious. Just how ambitious is becoming evident as the committee get down to developing a Business Plan.. A three-man subcommittee comprising Peter, Colin Dyke, and Brian Halliday have been charged with producing this plan and report.. This must be delivered to the ETTA and Reading Borough Council representatives as soon as possible. We are very pleased with the progress that has been made. However we appreciate that everyone will have concerns over the cost relating to the initial build and then the eventual running cost of such an all-embracing Centre. It is no secret that a preliminary look at all the projected figures are daunting, but at the moment we are crossing one bridge at a time.

So what is the grand plan? Alan Dines has worked very hard in drawing up the preliminary plans. He has produced drawings to encompass a **16-table venue** that would have all tables in match play conditions. In addition it will be possible to **increase the number of table spaces to 23 for coaching and training purposes.** It will be necessary to utilize this facility seven days a week and plans have already been produced that cover an all-embracing table tennis programme. In addition to excellent playing conditions, plans have been made for three tiers of seating on either side of the arena, a viewing gallery, offices, storage space, and a social area with café (which we hope will be run by volunteers- any offers?). A Pre Planning Application meeting has been held and the committee is awaiting comments from RBC Planning Department before proceeding with an outline planning application.

The Centre will need to establish the strongest possible links with local schools. Initial contact has been made with the Reading School Sports Partnership and this will be followed up with the Senior Competition Manager in due course. However we do need help to get the message across that we are involved in a major sporting project that will benefit all areas of the community. The new company and Centre will need a **logo** for letterheads etc. and the committee have agreed to a **competition** to find a suitable answer. **For the budding artists out there, here is your chance to show us your skill and ingenuity. We promise that the chosen winner will receive six bottles of wine for their effort.**

In the next Bulletin I will try to tell you where we are

going, to try to obtain the necessary funding. There will be a need for a major sponsor so please spread the word. Of course the recent financial bombshells have come at the wrong time; nevertheless we are all chipping in with ideas and we are very hopeful that this time folks we will succeed. We cannot emphasise strongly enough that this is a major project and we do need your help. We will need all sorts of assistance ranging from those who might have Leisure Centre experience, to those who may only be able to offer a minimum input. **Even if it is only a half hour of your time a week we would welcome you aboard.** We will need help not only from the committed table tennis fanatics but also those outside our sport who might like to get involved. Please give Peter Bradley a phone call. We really need to hear from you. The Project Team welcome your questions and comment. Please let Brian have your questions and, no matter how difficult how they may be, we will try to answer them. Please keep spreading the good news.

Brian Halliday - Public Relations Manager

Tel 01189 722421 or email [brianhalliday@readingtabletenniscentre.co.uk](mailto:brianhalliday@readingtabletenniscentre.co.uk)

## ANAGRAM RESULTS

Here are the three glorious winners of the anagrams contest in the November Newsletter (with the anagrams they cooked up for 'Alan Dines'):

1st Prize: **Colin Dyke** ('alien sand')

2nd Prize: **Peter Goatly** ('insane lad')

3rd Prize: **Jim McClure** ('ale and sin')

Three startling and evocative anagrams - though as it happened they weren't needed in order to decide the prizewinners, who were the first to send in completely correct answers. In case you tried to solve some of the anagrams yourself, you may like to see the solutions. Click on an anagram to see a player's name (from last season's div 1) below:

**Honest Minor** **Peach Skin**  
**Task Evader** **Lanky Wader**  
**Groveller alone now** **Barter deeply**  
**I'm a darts man** **Pink for a cad**  
**Try more bran** **Eroded wok**  
**Looney Vicar** **Tragedy over smut**  
**A rally man** **Hard, lippy**  
**We advise** **Huge seed lab**



## Derek Harrison wins the Fin Cup - Again report from Robin Lockwood

*The Fin Cup is the Curzon Club's own annual handicap tournament, which was played at Our Lady of Peace, and included our former Chairman Robin Lockwood.*

**Group 1:** Linda King +5, Geoff Johnson +2, John Willcocks -5, Derek Harrison +3

**Results:**

Linda King v Geoff Johnson (3-0) 21-14, 11-21, 21-11  
John Willcocks v Derek Harrison (0-8) 21-17, 12-21, 26-24  
Linda King v John Willcocks (10-0) 21-15, 21-19  
Geoff Johnson v Derek Harrison (0-1) 13-21, 18-21  
Derek Harrison v Linda King (0-2) 21-16, 21-19  
Geoff Johnson v John Willcocks (7-0) 16-21, 20-22

Positions: 1st Derek Harrison, 2nd Linda King, 3rd John Willcocks, 4th Geoff Johnson. Three way tie at the top. Decided on games averages. Derek 3-2, Linda 2-2 and John 2-3. If Derek had not taken a game off John it would have been down to points!

**Group 2:** Robin Lockwood +4, Nick Lean +3, Jim Brent +4, Mick Maynard -3

**Results:**

Robin Lockwood v Nick Lean (1-0) 15-21, 21-23  
Jim Brent v Mick Maynard (7-0) 14-21, 16-21  
Robin Lockwood v Jim Brent (0-0) 15-21, 21-16, 21-12  
Nick Lean v Mick Maynard (6-0) 21-16, 16-21, 13-21  
Mick Maynard v Robin Lockwood (0-7) 21-14, 22-24, 22-20  
Nick Lean v Jim Brent (0-1) 17-21, 21-18, 20-22

Positions: 1st Mick Maynard, 2nd Nick Lean, 3rd Jim Brent, 4th Robin Lockwood.

Another 3-way tie; this time for second. Nick 3-2, Jim 2-2, Robin 2-3. Mick had the height of the net to a millimetre but played steadily throughout. In spite of starting first, this group still had one match to play after group 1 had finished all theirs. Another triumph for the handicappers?

**Semi-final (1)** Winner Group 1 v Runner-up Group 2  
Derek Harrison v Nick Lean (0-0) 21-11, 21-8

Derek's attack improved all evening and, as regularly as Nick returned the ball, Derek always had the answers to ensure a comfortable victory.

**Semi-final (2)** Winner Group 2 v Runner-up Group 1  
Mick Maynard v Linda King (0-8) 21-18, 10-21, 22-20

A much more confident Linda looked dead and buried at 15-20 down in the third. She then took five points in a row to get to 20-20. However it was not to be and a relieved Nick reached the final for the second year in succession. Final: Derek Harrison v Mick Maynard (6-0) 16-21, 21-18, 21-19

**CHAMPION: DEREK HARRISON**

An absorbing and fluctuating final with many twists and turns. Mick looked comfortable in the first game, but as usual, Derek fought hard and won the second. In the deciding game, first of all one player would win a number of points in succession, only for his opponent to return the compliment and do the same. Derek's consistent flat hitting to Mick's backhand kept him in the game and in the final few points both players played miracle shots that neither knew much about - well, the audience didn't anyway. In the end Derek just pipped Mick in a sportingly played and competitive match that gave Derek his third Fin Cup. Tracy Maynard had been suffering from a seasonal lurgy, so opted not to play, but came along in order to practise her umpiring.

Our usual thankyou's to John Cunningham and the Our Lady of Peace Club. 2008 was the 38th year of the Fin Cup. Long may it continue!

Robin Lockwood.



**Harry Smart - your problems solved... and no messin.**

*Dear Harry, Are you Harry Brough?*



'Arry says: **No, not even slightly.**

*Dear Harry, Can man live by bread alone?*



'Arry says: **What? This is meant to be a table tennis column!**

*Dear Harry, Will I ever find love? Or failing that, a kinetic blade for under a tenner?*



'Arry says: **He that findeth such a blade shall not want for any other love.**

*Dear Harry, Will there be snow in Africa this Christmas-time??*



'Arry says: **No. Nor will there be a tight struggle against relegation in Division 2 of their tabletennis league this Christmas time. In fact, life is likely to be the greatest gift they get this year.**

*Dear Santa, Can I have a Butterfly Timo Boll ZLF 'Zylon Fibre' Blade and Sriver G3FX on both sides, please? I really want to win Division 6 this year.?*



'Arry says: **Errr... Think you've got the wrong bloke. However, I'd have to question whether the blade will really get the best out of your srivers. And anyway, is the D6 title really worth 150 quid?**

[smartarry@googlemail.com](mailto:smartarry@googlemail.com)



## Important Tournament Info from our Chairman, Nigel Maltby



1. **Individual Handicap Competition** This season's event will take place on **Sunday 4th January 2009** at the **Kingfisher Club**. Entry forms were issued to Club Secretaries for distribution at the start of the season and they are also available on the website or from Nigel Maltby. Entries should be sent to Nigel at 12 Queens Road, Caversham, Reading RG4 8DL by the closing date of Wednesday 31st December.

2. **Reading Closed Championships** Entry forms are now available for the Reading Closed Championships which are to be held at the Cippenham Club, Slough over the weekend of the **14th & 15th of March 2009**.

Entry forms are available from Club Secretaries, via the website or by contacting Reading Association secretary, Nigel Maltby, and completed forms should be sent to Charlie Goddard at 35, The Pastures, Oulton, Lowerstoft NR32 4WT, to arrive no later than Friday 13th February 2009.

Please do try to support this worthwhile event. Entry remains free. The Reading Management Committee did make efforts to bring the tournament back to Reading this year but were unfortunately unsuccessful. However it is hoped that this can be achieved within the next few seasons. In the meantime Cippenham is a top class venue.

Youth Division entrants should note that although the entry form states that the Youth Division singles is on Sunday, efforts will be made to fit this competition into the Saturday schedule.

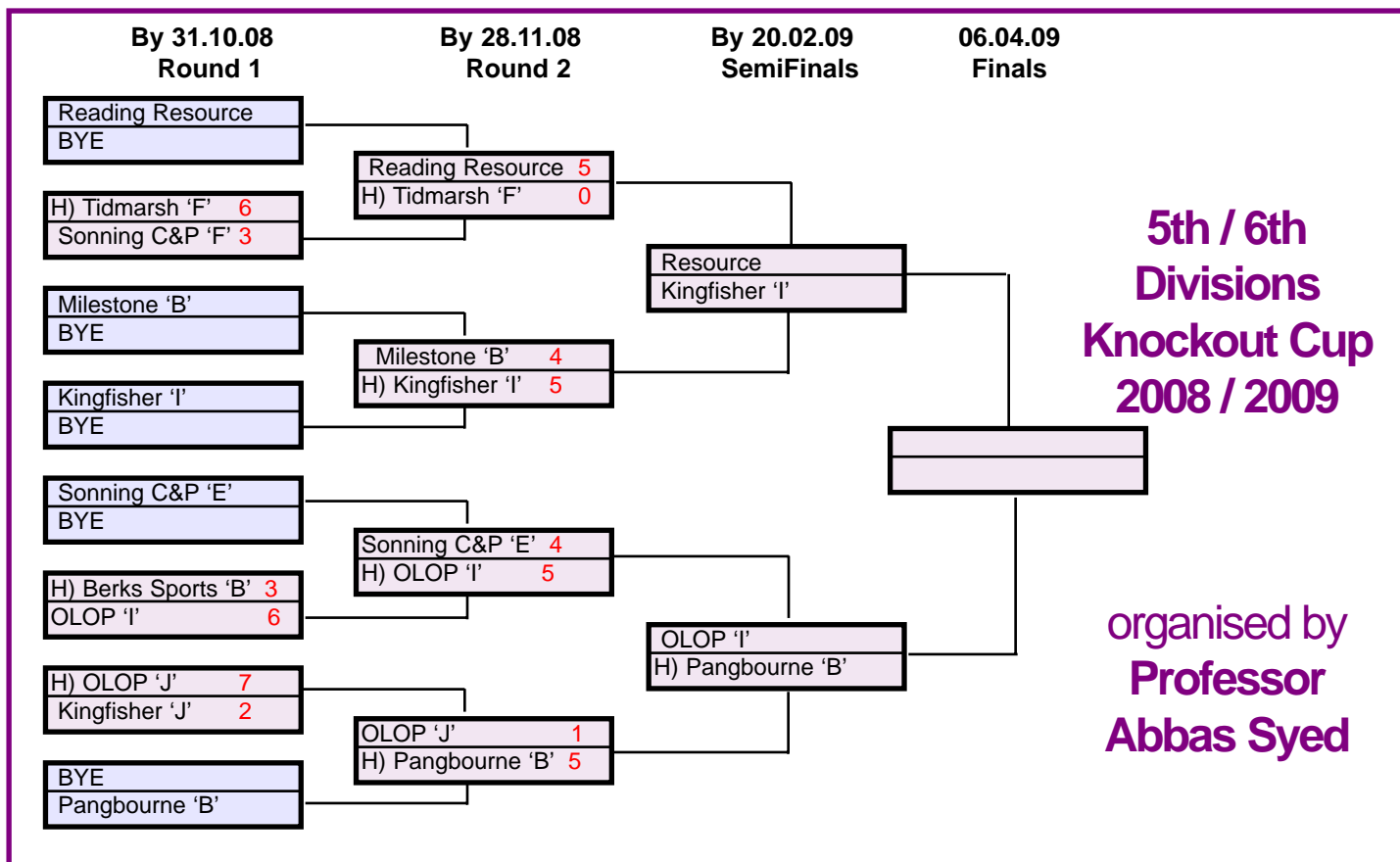
4. **IMPACT Challenge Shield** - This competition is by invitation only from teams competing in Divisions 1 or 2.

A hat-trick from Tony Reynolds and two from Peter Bradley saw YMCA 'B' edge past Kingfisher 'B' in the 1st round, Bradley defeating David Bishop 11-7, 11-5, 9-11, 11-5 to clinch victory in the final set of the night. Daniel Moses and Ian Cole both got maximums as Our Lady of Peace 'C' cruised to a 7-2 win at Kingfisher 'D', Mike Burrow adding a single with a win against Ivor Hardman before going on to lose narrowly to Trevor Organ 11-9, 12-10, 2-11, 10-12, 6-11 despite taking the first two games.

Kingfisher 'A' managed a comfortable 8-1 victory against a two man Our Lady of Peace 'D' side thanks to doubles from Ramesh Gehlot and Mark Banks and an Abhay Gehlot single. Tilehurst Methodists 'A' and Polish 'B' are also through to Round 2 after YMCA 'A' and Polish 'A' conceded their matches.

In Round 2 Mark Banks, Ramesh Gehlot and Kuldeep Gehlot secured a 5-0 win for Kingfisher 'A' against Our Lady of Peace 'B'. The full draw for the Quarter-Finals is as follows:

OLOP 'C' v OLOP 'A'	OLOP 'B' v Kingfisher 'A'
Tilehurst Meths 'A' v Tidmarsh 'A'	Polish 'B' v YMCA 'B'



# Team Handicap Competition 2008-09

organised by Professor Abbas Syed

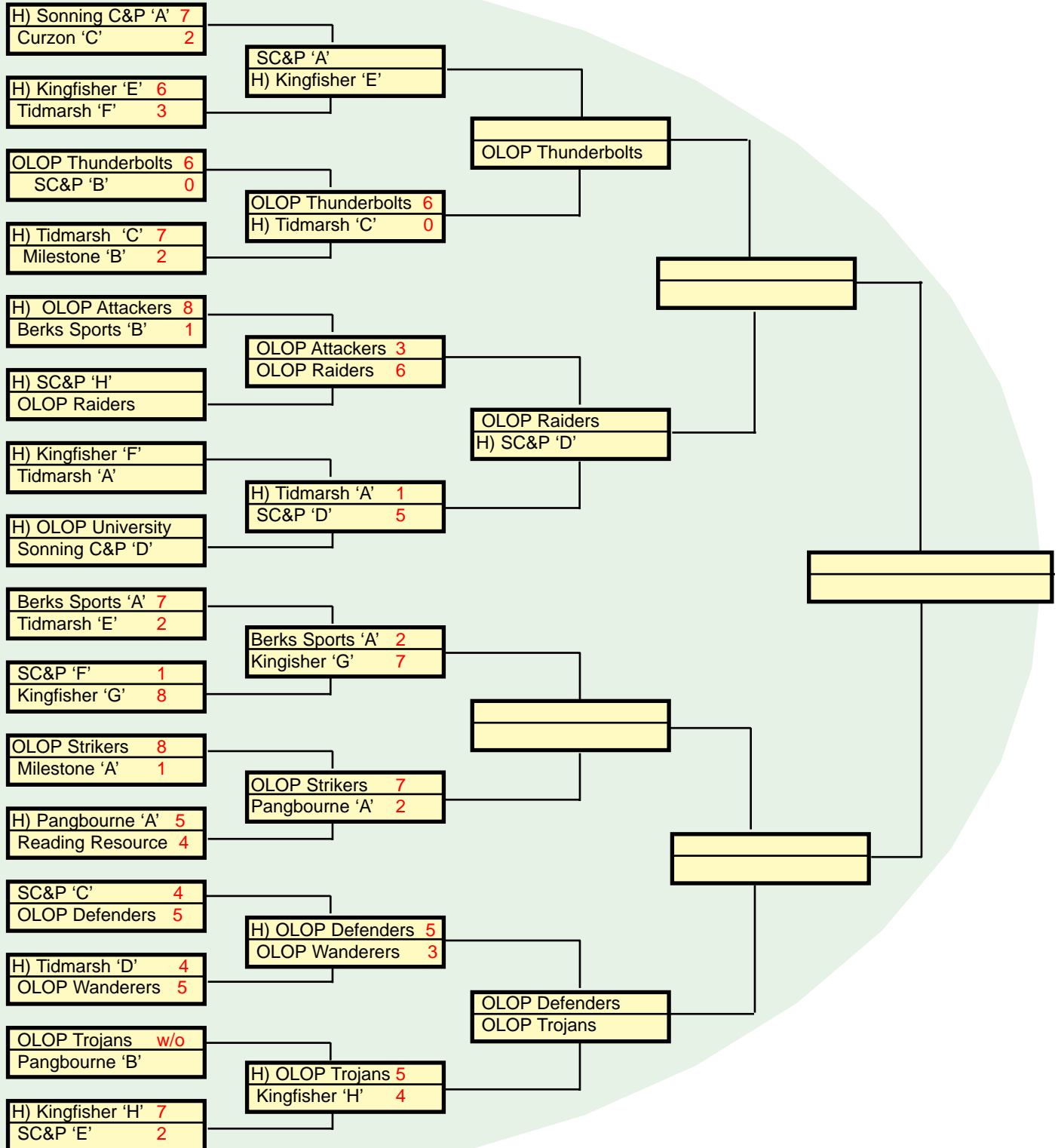
By w/b\* 27.10.08  
Round 1

By w/b 24.11.08  
Round 2

By w/b 16.02.09  
Quarter Final

Wed 01.04.09  
Semi-Final  
at Kingfisher

\*w/b = 'week beginning'



# DIVISION ONE *by Mark Banks*

**H**i Guys. Welcome once again to the Christmas and New Year edition of Banksy's Div One Column. I'm here all week but I have a slightly less than bumper festive edition for you this time round I'm afraid. Illness and work commitments have meant that this column is much reduced – a bit like my form but I'm sure I'll be back fighting fit in the New Year and beating the 50,000 or so people that have taken me out this time around! You know who you are so be warned!!

Merry Christmas everybody!

## Love & Peace

Mark x

Strange that even in a season where Hari is spending much of it in India, I've had a much publicised illness, the kids (I say kids – Kuldeep is bigger than me now!) have had other commitments that have kept them off the table, Bela's been injured, Ramesh has just been Ramesh and Steve's been trying to get used to his new bat and has subsequently only turned out 3 times, we in **Kingfisher 'A'** are still streets ahead of anyone else! They say that trophies aren't given out at Christmas but let's face it they may as well be in this Division – 100% perfect record and trust me I am not joking when I tell you we've actually been rubbish this year. As usual we started 4 nil down to Polish but never looked in any danger of even drawing that match let alone losing it – albeit Richard had to leave early and we're now so far clear that the engraver may as well get his engraving machine out and start engraving our name again.

## M.V.P. Hari Gehlot

**Banksy's Christmas Cracker: How do snails keep their shells so shiny?** By using snail varnish!

I think it goes a long way to showing the ambitions of **Polish 'A'** these days when they field a Division 2 player in the biggest and most eagerly awaited fixture of the season. To be fair to Simon he's a very decent player on his day with some tremendous shots in his armoury but to throw him into the deep end against us for his first Div 1 match of the season was in my opinion a bad selection move and I felt for him. Anyway, away from that match a player registration

issue has meant that they've now lost 2 and that's 2 too many for this lot I'm afraid. They're still great guys though. Martin, even when he's rubbish, (which let's face it isn't very often) is still way, way above everybody else, Richard's playing well – so too Derek after his career threatening injury and Heapsy started the season brilliantly and although has dipped a little is showing glimpses of that early form again. Merry Christmas guys. You're the best (er, 2nd best!).



## M.V.P. Martin Adams

**Banksy's Christmas Cracker: What is a snake's favourite lesson?** Maths. It's a good adder!!

I told David Streak and Bob Davis that I'd run out of things to say about **YMCA 'A'** so true to my words I thought I'd just repeat what I always say about them. You're just great guys!!! The internal battle with their B team is hotting up. Unfortunately that particular fixture was postponed first time around but when they get it on I'll be honest with you I can't call it – it's THAT close. So on they go, win after win, enjoyment after enjoyment it's great to see. David Streak – get this – the guy's only lost 3 all season. Amazing. Bob – great play. Should have beaten Hari 3 zip in truth. Pretty much had him beat all ends up. Colin – playing his part brilliantly. Super maximum against OLOP 'A'. Mike – still playing with a smile on his face and now on the scoresheet. They're the opposite to us really - everybody likes them. Merry Christmas to you and long may your form continue into the New Year and beyond.

## M.V.P. David Streak

**Banksy's Christmas Cracker: What did one eye say to the other eye?** Between you and me something smells!

Right on their heels then are the B Team. **YMCA 'B'**. Playing well this year and although new star signing Andy Misseldine has been out of action for much of the time since I last spoke with you, Tony & Jason and Peter have been doing well enough to maintain their lofty position. Like their A team the B's will be desperate to claim the bragging rights

down at the YM Club so be prepared for some fireworks in the months to come. Poor doubles record (not as poor as a certain other 'B' team I hasten to add) by the way may just cost them in the long run though. Happy Christmas to you.

## M.V.P. Andy Misseldine

**Banksy's Christmas Cracker: What is Santa's favourite Pizza?**

	PL	W	D	L	F	A	PTS
<b>Kingfisher 'A'</b>	11	11	0	0	91	19	22
<b>Polish 'A'</b>	9	7	0	2	65	25	14
<b>Reading YMCA 'A'</b>	10	6	2	2	61	39	14
<b>Reading YMCA 'B'</b>	10	7	0	3	58	42	14
<b>Kingfisher 'B'</b>	10	4	2	4	52	48	10
<b>OLOP 'C'</b>	11	3	3	5	50	60	9
<b>Tidmarsh Integralis 'A'</b>	10	3	3	4	38	62	9
<b>OLOP 'A'</b>	11	3	3	5	42	68	9
<b>Kingfisher 'C'</b>	11	3	2	5	51	59	8
<b>OLOP 'B'</b>	11	2	3	6	45	65	7
<b>Tilehurst Meths 'A'</b>	9	2	2	5	41	49	6
<b>Kingfisher 'D'</b>	9	0	0	9	16	74	0



**friend on Dec 24th?** It's Christmas! Eve!

John Cunningham's flagship side **OLOP 'A'** are doing pretty OK actually. Usually Barry, John, Susan, Clive and co have to scroll a bit further down the column to find their write up but some fine wins and solid play have elevated them to almost the top half of the table. Some achievement that - considering they were expecting a year in Div 2 due to their failings of last season. And they're all sharing the wins. Clive in particular seems over his injury problems and is picking up some notable scalps, Barry maxed it up at KFC (ha ha do you like it?!) and John and more regularly Susan are both getting themselves on the scoresheet. With Mark (who has uncharacteristically actually lost a couple) you just feel that this year they may be OK but you never know with this lot so don't go lumping on! A very Merry Christmas to you guys. Nice work to date.

**M.V.P. Mark Hancock**

**Banksy's Christmas Cracker: What's a sheep's favourite Christmas carol?** We wish Ewe a Merry Christmas!

Mmmm **KF 'C'**. Even that fine tuned athlete and best ever (now there's a debate) Reading League Player Martin Adams confesses to sometimes nipping into KFC on the way back from Polish matches! I love it too (as most of you who have seen me recently can probably tell) but our very own KFC (Kingfisher "C" for those that are a bit slow) are just having a bit of a tough time at the moment. Star man Eric – the man with more female names than male is actually playing very well but just seems to have lost that winning mentality that we all need at this level. Without his regular wins the points have started to be a little bit hard to come by and whilst the rest of the lads seem to be playing just about as well as they can they may just be peering over their shoulders a little bit. Colin turned in a vintage man of the match performance against Tidmarsh recently but it was to no avail as they went down by the narrowest of margins with Geoff in particular very unlucky in defeat that could have made the scoreline so different. Anyway, it's that time of the year so it's off to the pie shop for the annual jolly where they can sit and plan their Div 1 survival strategy. Merry Christmas.

**M.V.P. Eric Diana Maria Van-Nistlelooy**

**Banksy's Christmas Cracker: How do you make an apple puff?** Chase it round the garden a few times!

And so we find ourselves at **OLOP 'B' asingstoke**. Good hey! Normally a "safe as houses" mid table side they'll be the first to admit that they've not been firing on all cylinders this time around and as a result find themselves perilously close to the dropzone. I'm told they have a secret weapon up their sleeves so it may not all be doom and gloom but they need to get cracking – and fast. Our very own slimmer of the year - Murgy The Milkshake Man is still adjusting to life in shorts that actually fit and whilst playing OK, actually had better results when he was bigger –er, as opposed to myself who can't buy a win at this mammoth size of mine! My old pal Tim beat the kid – fantastic stuff and Peter is still the only guy I know to have lost a game from 10 love up! Yup it's true! How does that happen? 10 love??? Blimey. Even Ramesh doesn't do that! Sorry Peter. You did dare me! Andy is still playing a nice game with his big shots. Anyway a very Happy Christmas to you all and Murgy, look

A team most definitely on the up are **Kingfisher 'B'**. OK so they're still the worst doubles players in the whole League – let alone this Division! But at singles they are starting to do the business and I now see no dangers in them staying afloat this year. Blimey I've just checked the League Table and they're 5th!! Super stuff. The Kid is leading from the front. Still has the odd blip along the way – John Barclay & Tim Pang to name a couple but you don't get to play British League Division 7 South and West Midlands East without being out of the top drawer and he's desperate to play the end-of-season Masters so will be looking to qualify in style. Elsewhere, Trev has come in and started doing the business for them too and Alan and Dave continue to pick up good wins here and there. As I say, nicely moving in the right direction and that Christmas pudding will taste that much sweeter than it would have done a few weeks back! Merry Christmas!

**M.V.P. The Kid**

**Banksy's Christmas Cracker: What's brown and sweet and glides around an ice rink?** Bourneville & Dean!

Filling the final top 6 slot are **OLOP 'C'**. Mike and Julian would be the first to tell you that the main reason for the success that they're having this year is pretty much down to the brilliant form and massive improvement of one Daniel Moses. He's got it all. The serves, the shots, the temperament, the fitness (although take it from me and I know you're only 14 but you just might wanna go easy on the pizza buddy!!) and the ability and talent to go a long way in this game. Excellent stuff and no doubt there are more great things to come from him. Mike & Julian support him very well chipping in here and there. Those big backhands of theirs are hard to contain when they're in full flow and they'll both continue I'm sure to cause one or two upsets. No danger of relegation. Well played and Happy Christmas!

**M.V.P. Daniel Moses**

**Banksy's Christmas Cracker: Who hides in the bakery at Christmas?** A mince spy!

It's been said before but I'll say it again just like a box of chocolates you never know what you're gonna get with **Tidmarsh Integralis 'A'**. Probably the most inconsistent side in the Division – brilliant one day – all over the shop the next but a side who should be held with the utmost respect and who are able to pull big guns out of their hat just when they need it the most. Ian Packford – out all season – brand new father – first game back – BANG. Wins 3 to take out Tilehurst in a crunch battle. Lose him for the next game. In comes captain Lee – BANG – takes out Eric and Civil and only an inspired Dyke stops a great treble to give them the points and the bargain bucket at KFC. John Barclay – never stops talking – never gets any nets or edges – always gets loads against him – BANG – still playing well. Duncan Groves, Dave Wise, Bazza Carter step in when required - BANG - watch out. Dave Calcutt won't let this team go down so forget it. BANG BANG – they're safe. Merry Christmas to you all (yup even you JB!)

**M.V.P. Ian Packford (OK so he hasn't played hardly but will be a big influence in the new year)**

**Banksy's Christmas Cracker: What did Adam say to his girl-**



honestly it's OK - you can ditch the milkshake for just one day on the 25th and have some turkey lunch!

**M.V.P. The milkshake man**

**Banksy's Christmas Cracker: Why did the archaeologist go bankrupt?** Because his career was in ruins!

Yeah, well we've looked at all the other teams in the Division this year and we in **Tilehurst Meths 'A'** can't see ourselves finishing any lower than 5th! Yeah Right!! I thought at the time those words would come back to haunt them and it's looking like that's the case. Half way through and ominously for them only Kingfisher 'D' have performed worse. It's actually not all their own doing though. Venue and availability issues have meant that they have a couple of games in hand and actually so tight is the Division this year that 2 wins would coincidentally put them 5th – albeit one is against the high flying Poles but more crucially they are still to play Kingfisher 'D' twice and would expect maximum points from those two fixtures. Too good to go down? Possibly. But big improvements are required and they are up against some decent sorts all trying to do the same thing and avoid that 1 last remaining relegation place. Merry Christmas guys and good luck with the battle in the New Year. The Lob – I'll see you at St James's!

**M.V.P. Richard Ambrose**

**Banksy's Christmas Cracker: What do you get if you cross a snowman with a vampire?** Frostbite

So bringing up the rear as they have been doing all year are **Kingfisher 'D'**. If you'd asked me 3 months ago I would have said down - no shadow of a doubt – but if you asked me the same question now.... Er, I'm sorry to say

<b>LEADING AVERAGES</b>				
Player	Team	PL	W	%
Hari Gehlot	Kingfisher 'A'	21	21	100
Martin Adams	Polish 'A'	15	15	100
Ian Packford	Tidmarsh Integrals 'A'	3	3	100
Krasi Ivanov	OLOP 'A'	3	3	100
Andy Misseldine	Reading YMCA 'B'	18	17	94.44
Stephen Munson	Kingfisher 'A'	11	10	90.91
Nicky Heaps	Polish 'A'	17	15	88.24
Ramesh Gehlot	Kingfisher 'A'	21	18	85.71
David Streak	Reading YMCA 'A'	21	18	85.71
Bela Hegedus	Kingfisher 'A'	12	10	83.33
Stuart Williams	Kingfisher 'B'	21	16	76.19
Richard Rosinski	Polish 'A'	21	16	76.19
Daniel Moses	OLOP 'C'	33	25	75.76

that I would still say that! Having said that they've all had their moments. Trevor had a sensational victory over Eric Diana Maria, JJ's becoming a very good player and already has 5 scalps under his belt, Ivor has a couple and Dave as I said before is here more in a coaching capacity. Despite the weekly beatings I'm sure they've enjoyed their time in Div 1 so far and whilst relegation is inevitable I'm sure we won't have seen the last of them. Wishing you in 'D' a very Merry Christmas!

**M.V.P. Trevor Organ**

**Banksy's Christmas Cracker: Why did the man put his money in the freezer?** He wanted cold hard cash!

# DIVISION TWO *by Barry Carter*

Welcome to my second report of the season, so it must be Christmas and the half way stage. It looks like the champions of the division have already been decided (just like it is in the Championship, he! he!). Polish 'B' have taken on all-comers and beaten them all pretty easily. Next up for them in 2009 is us at Tidmarsh 'B' so hopefully there might be some Christmas spirit left over as we are in need of some points at the moment. There might be another miracle at Christmas, as Post Office 'A' currently lie second and look as though they want to play in division one next season. At the bottom only three points separate the bottom seven teams so it is all to play for down there in 2009.

**Week 7: Magnificent Seven**

Polish 'B' made it 7 wins from 7 matches as they overcame Post Office 'B'. Once Post Office 'B' had left out star performer Dave Mills the outcome was inevitable and they duly succumbed to an 8-2 defeat, there were maximums for both Kris Milerski and Simon Thorne. Ray Webb won a good battle with Andy Yon 12-10, 9-11, 11-8, 11-8 for P.O.'s only singles win of the night. There was a fun-packed evening down at Tidmarsh Village Hall as Tidmarsh 'B' entertained Post Office 'A'. The match swung back and forth and after Andy Stephens had beaten a below-par John Simmonds 6-11, 11-7, 11-9, 6-11, 11-1 to give us a 5-4 lead

it was left to me to steal the points but unfortunately Colin Hardman proved just a little tough as he went on to win 11-7, 11-8, 12-10. Sonning C&P 'B' maintained their push for promotion with an 8-2 win at Kingfisher 'E'. Brian Meheux and Malcolm Gregory still won two each but the main man once again was Keith Swain who defeated Niall McGrane 11-8, 12-10, 8-11, 11-2 to clinch his maximum. Kingfisher 'E' came back from 3-5 to share the points in a tight match. Oliver Shaw proved their main opponent as he won three for OLOP 'D'. The two Peter's (Bennett and Goatly) won two each for Kingfisher. The other match of the week was abandoned at 4-1 to OLOP 'E'. Get fit soon Paul, see you in the new year.

**Week 8 : Two wins for Post Office**

Post Office 'A' maintained their unbeaten record but were pushed all the way by OLOP 'E'. OLOP 'E' were in with a shout for an upset at 4-4, this was after the rapidly improving Liam McTiernan had won both of his games against John Simmonds (11-8, 13-11, 10-12, 6-11, 11-3) and Steve Hodder (11-9, 3-11, 11-4, 11-3) to put OLOP 'E' 3-1 up. Colin Hardman brought PO 'A' level at 3-3 when he narrowly defeated Raphael Jack 12-14, 11-7, 15-13, 8-11, 11-8. Colin took on Liam in game 9 and ran out a convincing winner 11-5, 11-7, 11-7 and then John Simmonds clinched both points with a 11-7, 11-4, 11-8 win over Raphael. Dave



Mills returned to the Post Office 'B' team in the match against relegation haunted OLOP 'D' (The Uni version) and promptly won all three which included inflicting Oliver Shaw's first defeat of the season, George White won two (I'm sure the matches on that evening didn't take very long, unlike ours eh George!) as he beat both Ian Cole and Harry Brough. Post Office 'B' eventually won 6-4. Polish 'B' won 9-1 at bottom side Curzon Club 'A'. John Willcocks was the CC's only winner on the night as he enjoyed a fantastic victory over the Polish 'B's number one Kris Milerski 4-11, 11-3, 11-6, 9-11, 11-7. Well done John! The other match saw the trio of Allan Bruton, Phil Mead and Peter Goatly destroy the hapless (on the evening anyway) Tidmarsh 'B' trio 9-1.

#### Week 9 : OLOP 'D' win at long last

OLOP 'D' finally got their campaign going as they registered their first win of the season against fellow surprise strugglers Curzon Club 'A'. Ian Cole and John Willcocks had a titanic battle in game 3 that resulted in a 4-11, 7-11, 11-5, 11-7, 16-14 win for Ian that gave OLOP a 2-1 lead. Oliver Shaw then defeated Mick Maynard 11-8, 11-6, 8-11, 11-6 and it was 3-1 and they never looked back from there, as both Ian and Oliver returned maximums. The Curzon trio of Mick, John and John Walker all managed to beat out of sorts Oliver Grist. The Friday night crowd were missing the impressive Liam McTiernan when Tidmarsh 'B' came to town and we took full advantage to win only our third win of the season 8-2 to ease our possible relegation fears. Andy Stephens produced his best performance of the season as he beat Peter Galea 6-11, 11-5, 11-8, 11-9. Kingfisher 'F' kept their faint hopes of promotion alive with a narrow 6-4 win over fellow mid-table Post Office 'B'. Allan Bruton and Peter Bennett won two each and coupled with Peter Bennett's 11-8, 11-8, 7-11, 11-7 win over George White saw them home. Dave Mills, once again won all three for Post Office 'A' but it was all to no avail. The top two continued their relentless march to promotion if they want it with comfortable wins. Post Office 'A' 7-3 over Kingfisher 'E' and Polish 'B' 8-2 over Sonning C&P 'B'.

#### Week 10 : Kingfisher 'E' finally win again

Kingfisher 'E' got off to a dream start against Tidmarsh 'B' as they quickly raced into a 4-0 lead and despite a spirited fightback held out to win 6-4. Niall McGrane won three, Roger Woolven-Allen two and Sharon the one.

### LEADING AVERAGES

Player	Team	P	W	%
Dave Mills	Post Office 'B'	18	17	94.4%
Kris Milerski	Polish 'B'	27	25	92.6%
Peter Galea	OLOP 'E'	12	11	91.7%
Simon Thorne	Polish 'B'	21	19	90.5%
Keith Swain	SC&P 'B'	18	16	88.9%
Niall McGrane	Kingfisher 'E'	18	15	83.3%
Simon Berry	SC&P 'A'	12	10	83.3%
John Simmonds	Post Office 'A'	24	19	79.2%
Colin Hardman	Post Office 'A'	27	20	74.1%
Liam McTiernan	OLOP 'E'	18	12	66.7%
Andy Stephens	Tidmarsh 'B'	15	10	66.7%

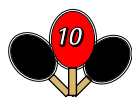
Dave Reynolds was our player of the evening as he won two, Steve Barnes won one as did I. Polish 'B' had probably their toughest match of the campaign so far against Sonning C&P 'A'. Nigel Maltby produced his best performance for a while as he went home happy with two wins, one a very impressive 11-6, 11-13, 11-7, 12-10 over Simon Thorne, the other over the current individual handicap holder Andy Yon. Simon Berry and Jeremy Willis both won one match. Polish 'B' finally won the match 6-4. The only other match of the week saw the return of Liam McTiernan for OLOP 'E' as he won three in an 8-2 win over Kingfisher 'F'.

#### Week 11 : The battle of the two unbeaten teams ends in a whimper

So it was all set up for the match of the season so far in division two. Polish 'B' played nine, won nine and Post Office 'A' played nine, won six, drew three. The crowds were drawn to the Polish club in their droves for what turned out to be a little one-sided. Polish 'B' were obviously running scared as they had recalled Graham Diplock to the side after several weeks absence and he got them off to a good start as he overcame Colin Hardman 13-11, 15-13, 4-11, 13-11. From there Post Office found themselves 5-0 down before they won another end. John Simmonds came close to giving them hope of a point with a great display in the match with Kris Milerski before he lost 11-7, 6-11, 8-11, 12-10, 3-11. Post Office 'A's only joy on the evening was their doubles win as Colin and John thrashed the pairing of Andy Yon and Bob Walker 11-2, 12-10, 11-7. Kingfisher 'F' and Sonning C&P 'B' both missed out on the opportunity to close the gap on Post Office 'A' as they could muster only one point between them in their matches. Kingfisher 'F' could only draw with Curzon Club 'A' whilst Sonning C&P 'B' were surprisingly defeated 6-4 by Post Office 'B'. Ray Webb produced his performance of the season with a good win over Brian Meheux. In the other match of the week OLOP 'E' won 6-4 at Kingfisher 'E'.

That's all from me for this year, hope you have enjoyed the ramblings and I'd like to take this opportunity to wish you all a merry Christmas and all the best for 2009.

	PL	W	D	L	F	A	PTS
1 Polish 'B'	10	10	0	0	76	24	20
2 Post Office 'A'	10	6	3	1	57	43	15
3 Kingfisher 'F'	10	3	4	3	49	51	10
4 SC&P 'B'	9	5	0	4	47	43	10
5 OLOP 'E'	9	4	0	5	47	43	8
6 Tidmarsh 'B'	10	3	2	5	47	53	8
7 Post Office 'B'	9	4	0	5	40	50	8
8 SC&P 'A'	7	3	0	4	35	35	6
9 Kingfisher 'E'	9	2	1	6	36	54	5
10 Curzon Club 'A'	9	2	1	6	35	55	5
11 Reading University	8	1	3	4	31	49	5



# DIVISION THREE *by Nick Lean*

## Headlines at the half-way stage:

### Longfield top the table with a 100% record

#### Games difference could decide the second promotion spot

**Longfield** have continued their run of good results, beating all their nearest challengers and they top the table with a 100% record from their matches to date. Narrow wins over Berks Sports (6-4), Kingfisher (7-3) and Tilehurst Methodists (6-4) were followed by easier defeats of OLOP 'G' and Sonning C&P. Brian Chinneck and Martin Pugh continue to beat most of their opponents while Ian Fletcher, who has now been re-registered to this team, is also winning his fair share. They also have the best doubles record in the Division, with just one defeat to date. If these three continue to play in most of the remaining matches, Longfield will surely be promoted as champions.

At the half-way mark, there are 4 teams in a good position to grab the second automatic promotion place. But do you all realise that games difference will come into play to decide league positions, if there are two or more teams level on points at the end of the season? It's so close that I believe this is going to happen in Division 3. The question is, will that prospect influence team selection in the second half of the season?

**Tilehurst Methodists 'B'** are in second spot (on games difference) having won just 2 of the recent 4 matches. They suffered their first defeat of the season, 4-6 at Longfield, despite another maximum from Ray Yau, but bounced back with wins over Tidmarsh 'D' and Springfield. Surprisingly, they finished the first half with a home defeat to OLOP 'F', a match in which Ray Yau surrendered his unbeaten record to Steve Purchase 11-7, 11-8, 11-13, 7-11, 7-11. Their team selection from a squad of five may be critical if Tilehurst want to gain promotion. Doubles - 5/9.

**Kingfisher 'G'** are level on points with Tilehurst Meths, but have won less games to date as a result of their recent wins all being close. After losing to Longfield, they defeated Tidmarsh 'D' 7-3, then Springfield and OLOP 'F' both 6-4. Eric Holmes recorded maximums in each of these victories, with Chris Pusey getting his second max of the season against an OLOP team. Once again a squad of five may pose team selection challenges, if this team want to challenge for second spot in the second half. Doubles - 5/9.

**Berks Sports 'A'** have got out of their habit of drawing most matches, put in some good performances, recorded a few decent wins and moved up the table to challenge the top teams. They perhaps came the closest to taking a point from Longfield when Bob Woodmansee and Dave Chard played out of their skins to win two apiece before eventually going down 4-6. Who knows what the result might have been had Nigel Goodman been available to play in that match, as he has lost just 4 times in 8 matches. Sports were then held at home by Tidmarsh 'D', but went on to defeat Springfield and Tidmarsh 'C' 9-1 and OLOP 'F' 7-3. Doubles - 7/9.

**Tidmarsh 'C'** are the last of the four teams in the promotion fight, having had 3 wins and one defeat since the first Newsletter. But they may only regard themselves as being in this contest if they can get something from their outstanding fixture, which is against Longfield. Their recent wins were over Springfield (6-4), OLOP 'F' (7-3) and Sonning C&P (8-2), before getting a bit of a thumping at Berks Sports. With this being another 5-man squad, the (un)availability of their better players may prevent a serious promotion challenge. Doubles - 5/8.

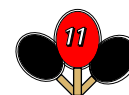
**Sonning C&P 'C'** have lost the three matches they've played since the previous report, slipped down the table and are out of the running for promotion. Defeats came at the hands of OLOP 'G' (4-6), Tidmarsh 'C' (2-8) and finally 0-10 against Longfield. With Jeremy Willis only featuring in one of these matches and I'm told will not be available for any of their home matches, it looks like Paul Treadgold's team may struggle to keep clear of relegation if the chasing teams pick up many more points. Doubles - 4/9.

**Our Lady of Peace (Impact) 'F'** were in danger of picking up no further points before the turn of the year, having lost to Tidmarsh 'C' and Berks Sports, despite a Harry Brough hat-trick. But they caused a big upset by winning 7-3 at Tilehurst Methodists, as Steve Purchase won three, Alex Fear two and Phil Mannion (who's now registered for this team) won one. Despite this, they remain dangerously close to the relegation zone. Doubles - 3/9.

**Tidmarsh 'D'** have continued with their mixed bag of results, picking up enough points to see them just about stay clear of the relegation zone. Andy Jeffrey hit an excellent maximum to help the team to a very good draw at Berks Sports, where Steve Ricks also

## LEADING AVERAGES

Player	Team	P	W	%
Ray Yau	Tilehurst B	24	23	95.8%
Mary Allan	Tilehurst B	9	8	88.9%
Eric Holmes	Kingfisher G	24	21	87.5%
Brian Chinneck	Longfield A	21	18	85.7%
Martin Pugh	Longfield A	24	20	83.3%
Nigel Goodman	Berks Sports A	24	20	83.3%
Jeremy Willis	Sonning C&P C	9	7	77.8%
Steve Callidine	Tidmarsh C	9	7	77.8%
Phil Burke	Springfield A	18	13	72.2%
Ian Fletcher	Longfield A	24	16	66.7%
Mike Aistrop	Tidmarsh C	21	14	66.7%
Steve Purchase	OLOP F	18	12	66.7%
Francois Durand	Tidmarsh C	15	10	66.7%
Ian Davis	OLOP G	12	8	66.7%
Harry Brough	OLOP F	6	4	66.7%



picked up a vital win. Defeats followed at the hands of Kingfisher and Tilehurst, before a narrow win over OLOP 'G', in which Andy and Steve won two each and Paul Harris scored a vital win. Doubles - 5/9.

**Our Lady of Peace 'G'** have clawed their way off the bottom of the table as they picked up their first points of the season in a win at Sonning C&P, thanks to a good all-round team effort which included a maximum for Ian Davis. This was followed by two more defeats, to Longfield and then, perhaps more critically, at Tidmarsh 'D', despite a maximum from Mark Bullion. But their year ended with a 7-3 win over Springfield in which Pat Daniels won three, Mark Bullion two and Cedric Dias one. If they could turn out a few more performances like this, Bully's team could yet avoid relegation. Doubles - 1/9.

**Springfield 'A'** have lost four more matches and currently the team looks doomed to relegation, despite Phil Burke being on 72% for the season. If the other team members could provide a little more support, the odd extra game or two would see them picking up points, as they have suffered a number of narrow defeats. Doubles - 2/9.

Thanks to those of you who have put useful and/or insightful comments on the scorecards - it really helps me to understand what went on behind the scores and occasionally provides raw material for the weekly Newspaper reports or these Newsletter articles.

Team	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Longfield 'A'	8	8	0	0	62	18	16
Tilehurst Meths 'B'9	6	1	2	60	30	13	13
Kingfisher 'G'	9	6	1	2	51	39	13
Berks Sports 'A'	9	4	4	1	55	35	12
Tidmarsh 'C'	8	5	0	3	44	36	10
Sonning C&P 'C'	9	3	1	5	37	53	7
OLOP 'F'	9	3	0	6	40	50	6
Tidmarsh 'D'	9	2	2	5	36	54	6
OLOP 'G'	9	2	0	7	29	61	4
Springfield 'A'	9	0	1	8	26	64	1

The closest contests in recent matches were:

Paul Treadgold v Ian Davis: 12-10, 11-9, 9-11, 22-24, 8-11

Ian Fletcher v Dave Chard: 8-11, 6-11, 12-10, 11-9, 13-15.

Finally, season's greetings to everyone and may I wish you all a happy, healthy and (hopefully) prosperous New Year.

Nick Lean

## ***DIVISION FOUR*** by Derek Harrison

**H**ello everyone, and welcome to 2009. I hope you all have a good second half.

**Milestone 'A'** continue to do the business by beating Tidmarsh 'E' 7-3. Hugh was the star by winning all three with John Tucker and John Crosfield winning two each. At OLOP 'H' it took a 5-11, 4-11, 9-11 win for John T over Ali in game 10 to secure a 4-6 win. This gave him a double and with Hugh also winning two and a vital single from John C, this helped them to the two points. A good team performance at Sonning saw them come away with a 4-6 win. Hugh and John C won two each and the returning John Evans won one besides teaming up with Hugh to win the doubles. In their big match with Curzon 'B' they quickly went into a 6-0 lead and finally won 8-2. Hugh played really well by winning all three but was taken to a 5th set against Geoff and Nick. John T and John C played their part by winning two each.

**Doubles 9/10 90%**

**Curzon 'B'** are keeping an eye on the chasing pack and dropped a vital point at Kingfisher. Derek and Jim won two each by beating Mike and Sylvia, while Nick won one by beating Sylvia. A great team performance saw us beat Pangbourne 'A' 6-4. Geoff and I won two each besides winning the doubles. Jim played his part by beating Tom. Against Tidmarsh 'E' we won 8-2. Geoff was the top man by gaining a maximum, all 3-straight. Nick and I won two each. At Milestone 'A', where we thought we could at the very least gain a draw, we lost 8-2. Geoff beat John T and I beat John C.

**Doubles 6/10 60%**

**Pangbourne 'A'** lost only their second game of the season when going down 6-4 at Curzon 'B' after leading 1-3 and 2-4 at one stage. Leroy and Roger won two each. Next came their best performance of the season by beating St Laurence 8-2. Pete Welch and Leroy both gained brilliant trebles. Roger Stevens had a nice 11-5, 4-11, 11-8, 11-7 win over Ben. At Longfield, Leroy won all 3 and with Tom and Pete winning one each, this gave them a share of the spoils. In their big game with Tilehurst they won at a canter. Roger hit a great maximum with Leroy and Tim gaining doubles to help towards an 8-2 victory.

**Doubles 7/10 70%**

**Tilehurst Meths 'C'**, who on their day are a match for all of the sides are in a good spot. At OLOP they came away with a 3-7 victory, mainly thanks to a great Wendy Porter hat trick. Jan Wright won two, with Mal Collis winning one. At home to Sonning 'D', Nigel Rowland returned to the side and won two by beating Ian and Anthony. Wendy and Jan also beat Anthony, which helped towards a draw. At Curzon 'C', Wendy and Nigel won two each besides the two girls winning the doubles to gain them another draw. Next came a return to form by Jan, who won all three against Kingfisher. Mal won two, and then teamed up with Jan to win the doubles, and give them a 6-4 win. Wendy missed the first game - were you at Reading vs Coventry? At Pangbourne, Wendy was the only score, by beating Leroy and Tom in a 2-8 defeat.

**Doubles 7/10 70%**



## DIV 4 LEADING AVERAGES

Player	Team	P	W	%
Dan West	St Laurence	21	18	86
Hugh Crosfield	Milestone 'A'	30	24	80
John Tucker	Milestone 'A'	27	21	78
Geoff Johnson	Curzon Club 'B'	21	16	76
Tracy Maynard	Curzon Club 'C'	27	20	74
Pete Welch	Pangbourne 'A'	15	11	73
Leroy Wilson	Pangbourne 'A'	30	21	70
Wendy Porter	Tilehurst Meths 'C'	27	18	67
Tim Raby	Sonning C&P 'D'	27	18	67
Roger Stevens	Pangbourne 'A'	18	12	67
Hanson Xu	OLOP 'H'	30	20	67
Derek Harrison	Curzon Club 'B'	24	15	63
Mike Dorrington	Kingfisher 'H'	27	17	63
Ken Park	Longfield 'B'	27	17	63

**St Laurence** are another team who could give everyone a run for their money. At home to Kingfisher, Dan and Chris West both obtained trebles in their 7-3 win. Ben picked up a single by beating Diana. They did fail at Pangbourne 'A', however, by going down 8-2. Dan and Chris won one each by beating Roger. At Curzon 'C', without Dan, they went down 7-3. Chris won two and Ben won one. At home to Tidmarsh 'E' they just got home 6-4. Chris was on top form by winning all three 3-straight. Ben played his part by winning two and also teamed up with Chris to win the doubles. **Doubles 5/10 50%**

**Curzon Club 'C'** are going well, and had a great 3-7 win at Longfield 'B', who came up with them last season. Linda King gained her first-ever 4th Div maximum by beating John Belcher 12-10, 4-11, 9-11, 5-11; John Beardmore 13-11, 8-11, 11-13, 11-5, 9-11 and Ken 11-9, 7-11, 8-11, 8-11. Tracy Maynard and Terry Spice did well by gaining doubles. At home to Tilehurst they shared the spoils, with Terry and Tracy winning two and Linda one. In Terry's game with Jan, he was 10-5 up in the 3rd leg, and lost 10-12 - but did go on to win in 5. At home to St Laurence, Terry, Tracy and Linda all won 2 each, which helped towards a 7-3 victory. At OLOP on her way to a fine maximum, Tracy was 10-5 down in the 5th against Hanson, and won 10-12. With Terry and Linda winning two each, this helped them to a 2-8 win. This week they drew with Sonning 'D'. Terry and Tracy won two each, while Linda won one by beating Derek. **Doubles 4/10 40%**

**Longfield 'B'** have been in and out this season and since my previous notes they lost 3-7 to Curzon 'C'. Ken Park won two besides teaming up with John Beardmore to win the doubles. At Kingfisher they came away with a 4-6 victory. Colin Field hit a great three-straight treble, with John Beardmore winning two and then the two of them won those vital doubles. At Sonning, Mike Shore won two, with Ken and Colin winning one each, but this was not enough as the side lost 6-4. They then gained a fine draw with Pangbourne with Ken winning two and Colin and John Beardmore winning one each.

Ken obtained his second maximum of the season against Tidmarsh 'E' and with Tony Eames also winning three, this helped them to a 3-7 win.

**Doubles 5/10 50%**

**Sonning Com & P 'D'** came back to form by beating Longfield 6-4. Martyn Fenner, playing in only his second game of the season, hit a great treble, with Tim giving him good support by winning two besides teaming up to win the doubles. According to the card, Martyn is now ranked 40 in Wales. They then obtained a fine draw at Tilehurst, where Tim won all three, which included a 11-8, 5-11, 20-22, 8-11 win over Nigel. Ian Ayres won the other two by beating Wendy and Jan. At home to OLOP they went down 4-6. Ian won two, Tim won one. Tim then scored a great treble against Milestone by beating Hugh 13-11, 11-8, 11-7, John C 11-6, 11-4, 10-12, 11-7 and John E 11-4, 7-11, 11-7, 11-7. But with Ian only picking up a single they went down 4-6. At Curzon 'C', Tim and Ian both won two each, besides teaming up to win the doubles to enable them to gain a point. **Doubles 4/10 40%**

**Kingfisher 'H'** had a fine draw with Curzon 'B', with Ken Robb playing well and winning all three with ease. Mike Dorrington picked up a nice single by beating Nick and he teamed up with Ken to win the doubles against Jim and Nick. At St Laurence, Mike and Ken were the only single scorers when they both beat Ben in a 7-3 defeat. Sylvia Bruton had a good night against Longfield by beating John Beardmore 11-6, 11-5, 11-7 and John Belcher 11-6, 11-5, 7-11, 9-11, 11-4; however Ken and Diana only picked up singles as they lost 4-6. At Tilehurst, Mike won two and Diana and Ken won one each in a 6-4 defeat. At home to OLOP, Sylvia and Mike both won two each by beating Al and Chris to help towards a draw. **Doubles 4/10 40%**

Since my previous notes, **OLOP 'H'** have had a few close defeats where perhaps some close games have gone against them. In their match against Tilehurst they went down 3-7. Hanson won two by beating Jan and Mal; and Al also beat Mal. At home to Milestone, Hanson and Chris both won two each in their 4-6 defeat. Next came a great 4-6 win at Sonning. Hanson hit a fine maximum, ably backed by a good double from Al, and a vital single from Chris. At home to Curzon 'C', they went down 2-8. Hanson

Team	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Milestone 'A'	10	10	0	0	73	27	20
Pangbourne WMC 'A'	10	7	1	2	63	37	15
Curzon Club 'B'	10	7	1	2	58	42	15
St Laurence Church	10	5	2	3	50	50	12
Tilehurst Meths 'C'	10	4	3	3	48	52	11
Curzon Club 'C'	10	4	2	4	53	47	10
Longfield 'B'	10	3	2	5	48	52	8
Sonning C&P 'D'	10	2	2	6	44	56	6
Kingfisher 'H'	10	2	2	6	39	61	6
OLOP 'H'	10	2	1	7	38	62	5
Tidmarsh 'E'	10	1	0	9	36	64	2

and Al won one each. Hanson gained his second maximum of the season at Kingfisher, to help them to a good draw.

**Doubles 1/10 10%**

**Tidmarsh 'E'** are in a little trouble at the bottom, having lost 5 in a row. At Milestone, Dave Edwards and Bob Griffiths won one each and teamed up to inflict Milestone's first doubles defeat, by beating Hugh and John T 3-11, 6-11, 14-16. They then played Curzon 'B' and went down 8-2. Dave 'E' and Terry won their games. At St Laurence, reserve Bob Sunerton won two with Mick Osborne and

Dave E winning one each in their 6-4 defeat. At home to Longfield they lost 3-7 with Dave S, Dave E and Mick all beating John Beardmore.

**Doubles 4/10 40%**

At this stage I would remind captains to post the score cards promptly, with a first class stamp as per rule 12.10.

Finally I would like to wish you all the compliments of the season and hope 2009 is a healthy and happy year for all of you.

## ***DIVISION FIVE*** by Nigel Rowland

**I**t's nearly the half way mark and teams are starting to sort themselves out both at the top and the bottom of the division. Three out of four of my predicted teams (SC&P 'E', Tilehurst Methodists 'D' and Pangbourne 'B') to make the top of the division are still in the running. I am not suggesting other teams mid table (Birch Copse 'A' and the likes) could not mount a serious challenge, but injuries, illness and unavailability of key players could yet give others hope. At the bottom there are six teams within 2 points of one another, it's going to be fascinating watching these

teams in the third quarter. My congratulations go to OLOP 'I' as the most improved base-ment team. The signing of Ancharay Ashley could be a good replacement for Oliver Grist who has moved up to Division 2, we wish Oliver good luck. We have a couple more registrations for Reading Resource, they now have 17 players on their books - enough to field 4 teams! Good luck to their new players in the coming months. Many thanks to all for comments on the match cards, please keep them coming in. I try to include key events in the report I send to Nigel Maltby every week (for



publishing in the Evening Post) but sadly Nigel sometimes is short of editorial space and has to edit down my report. Lastly I wish all players a great Christmas and New Year. Without your competitiveness and support there would be no division.

Before going into team results, I have an announcement for all Div 5 captains to take note of. **Derek Crombie, who is captain of Kingfisher 'I', is about to go off to Australia - so his place as captain will be taken by Rob Lean. Rob will in future be the man to contact - on 0781 268 0733.**

Tilehurst Methodists 'D' are in top spot, remaining undefeated so far this season. This term they have beaten Birch

### ***DIV 5 LEADING AVERAGES***

Player	Team	P	W	%
Richard Lownsbrough	Tilehurst Meths 'D'	12	12	100
Ancharay Ashley	OLOP (Rdg Univ) 'I'	3	3	100
Duncan Webber	Reading Resource	3	3	100
Neil Havard	Reading Resource	18	17	94.44
Howard Taylor	Pangbourne 'B'	18	17	94.44
Matthew Stone	Sonning C&P 'E'	18	16	88.89
Martin Wetherell	Tilehurst Meths 'D'	21	18	85.71
Roy Hull	Birch Copse 'A'	20	16	80
Dave Jones	Tilehurst Meths 'D'	18	14	77.78
Clive Taylor	Pangbourne 'B'	18	13	72.22
Tony House	Sonning C&P 'F'	24	17	70.83

Copse 'A' 6-4 - a Richard Lownsbrough treble won the night in a tight match; Kingfisher 'I' 9-1, Milestone 'B' 8-2, and drew with Pangbourne 'B' having fielded a weakened team, a treble from Martin Wetherell saved a point. Richard Lownsbrough 6/6, Martin Wetherell 8/9 including 2 trebles, Dave Jones 7/9 including 2 trebles, Chris Taylor 4/9. Doubles 3/4.

Pangbourne 'B' follow in second spot and also remain undefeated this season. This term they have defeated Milestone 'B' 6-4, a Howard Taylor treble won the day; SC&P 'F' 8-2, SC&P 'E' 7-3 and got an important draw against Tilehurst Methodists 'D'. Howard Taylor 11/12 including 3 trebles, Clive Taylor 5/9, Colin Taylor 1/6 and Geoff Chivers 7/9 including 1 treble. Doubles 2/4.

SC&P 'E' have lost their way this term, but remain just behind the leaders in third spot, An injury to Phil Turton and fielding a weakened team on two occasions explains the slip. This term they defeated Kingfisher 'I' 8-2, drew with Tidmarsh 'F', Phil Turton winning the 10th to save a point; but lost to Pangbourne 'B' 3-7 and Birch Copse 'A' 4-6 having conceded 2 games due to the Phil Turton injury. Matthew Stone 5/6 including 1 treble, Phil Turton 5/10 including 1 treble, Ron Stone 5/12, Doubles 2/4.

Birch Copse 'A' have been inconsistent with their form and now rest mid table. This term they defeated SC&P 'F' 6-4, a Roy Hull treble saved the day; SC&P 'E' 6-4 were fortunate to win due to Phil Turton's injury, drew against Reading Resource, a Ken Sherry 5-set win in the 8th saved

a point; lost to Tilehurst Meths 'D' 4-6, Roy Hull had an epic 20-18 win in the 5th against Martin Wetherell; and newly resurgent OLOP 'I' 4-6. Roy Hull 8/11 including one treble, Jes Eassom 5/11, Michael Williams 4/12, Ken Sherry 2/3, Peter Sheppard 3/6. Doubles 1/5.

Kingfisher 'I' share 5th spot with four other teams having defeated Reading Resource 8-2 Derek Spicer played a blinder, drew with SC&P 'F', a Derek Spicer win in the 10th saved a point; but lost heavily against Tilehurst Meths 'D' 1-9, in a bizarre match Vibhor Tandon defeated Chris Taylor 10-0 in the 5th to win their only game; and SC&P 'E' 2-8. Vibhor Tandon 3/9. Vishal Tandon 3/12, Rob Lean 0/3, Derek Crombie 2/6 and Derek Spicer 5/6 including 1 treble. Doubles 3/4.

Reading Resource also share a 5th spot having had an uncomfortable time this term. They have drawn against OLOP 'I', a Duncan Webber treble saved a point; and Birch Copse 'B', once again a Neil Havard treble saved a point; and lost to Tidmarsh F 4-6, despite another Neil Havard treble; and Kingfisher 'I' 2-8. Neil Havard 6/6 including 2 trebles, Maureen Allchurch 4/9, Adrian Pacey 0/12, Duncan Webber 3/3 and Tessa Williams 0/3. Doubles 2/4.

SC&P 'F' also share a 5th spot having only picked up 1 point this term. They drew against Kingfisher 'I', a Tony House treble saved the day; and lost to Birch Copse 'A' 4-6, Tony House lost out in a close 5 set thriller to Roy Hull in the 8th; and Pangbourne 'B' 2-8. Tony House 6/9 including 1 treble, Pete Harman 1/6, Mike Casserley 2/3, Derek Maltby 0/3 and Malcolm Faulkner 1/6. Doubles 1/3.

Tidmarsh 'F' also share 5th spot and have shown a touch of form this term to climb out of the relegation spaces. They have beaten OLOP 'I' 8-2, thanks to a Steve Andrews treble; Reading Resource 6-4, thanks to a Bob Sunerton five set win against Adrian Pacey in the 8th; drew with SC&P 'E', thanks to a Mike Bundy treble; but lost to Milestone 'B'

Team	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Tilehurst Meths 'D'	9	7	2	0	67	23	16
Pangbourne WMC 'B'	8	6	1	1	52	28	13
Birch Copse 'A'	9	5	1	3	51	39	11
Sonning C&P 'E'	9	5	1	3	49	41	11
Reading Resource	9	3	2	4	42	48	8
Kingfisher 'I'	9	3	2	4	38	52	8
Sonning C&P 'F'	9	2	2	5	39	51	6
Tidmarsh 'F'	9	2	2	5	36	54	6
OLOP (Rdg Univ) 'I'	8	2	1	5	30	50	5
Milestone 'B'	9	1	2	6	36	54	4

2-8. Bob Sunerton 5/12, Mike Bundy 5/6 including a treble, John Harland 3/6, Steve Andrews 5/9, Dave Humphreys 0/3. Doubles 3/4.

OLOP 'I' have put together a run of form to stay in touch with the basement pack. This term they defeated Milestone 'B' 6-4, thanks to an epic Oliver v Oliver five set win in the 8th (sounds like a court case!) and their first doubles victory; Birch Copse 'A' 6-4, thanks to a treble from new signing Ancharay Ashley; drew with Reading Resource, thanks to a Martin Adams win in the 8th; but lost to Tidmarsh 'F' 2-8. Dan Mitchell 3/6, Scott Burrell 3/9 and Tony Barrett 0/6, Martin Adams 6/9, Ancharay Ashley 3/3. Doubles 2/4.

Milestone 'B' are continuing to struggle having just lost out by one game in two matches but still remain in contact with the basement pack. They had a good win against Tidmarsh 'F', winning 8-2 thanks to trebles from Gerrard Thorp and Oliver Bonser plus a first win for Lee Bainbridge; but have lost 4-6 against Pangbourne 'B' in a tight match; OLOP 'I' 4-6, despite a Gerrard Thorp treble; and 2-8 against high fliers Tilehurst Meths 'D'. Gerard Thorp 8/12 including 2 trebles, Oliver Bonser 6/12 including 1 treble, Lee Bainbridge 1/6, Andrew Benning 2/6. Doubles 1/4.

## ***DIVISION SIX*** by *Duncan Groves*

**A**t the half-way stage of the season, Polish 'C' remain unbeaten and look firm favourites to take the Division 6 title. Until Week 9, it was very much a two horse race with Post Office 'C' neck and neck. But Weeks 9 and 10 brought successive defeats for Post Office, including one to Polish themselves and the 3 point gap will now be tough to close.



In the chasing pack are the young OLOP 'J' team, Birch Copse 'B', Kingfisher 'J' and Sonning C&P 'H'. Surely none of these teams can get to the top of the pile, though they will play a major rôle in deciding who wins the league and, with a great run of form, any of them could yet feature in the chase for a promotion place.

Individually, Mick Grantham of Post Office remains on top

of the averages, with both Dave Aust and Richard Green (Sonning and Birch Copse respectively) close behind. Young Daniel McTiernan is proving to be the 2008/09 version of Daniel Moses. After a relatively slow start with three singles defeats in the first three weeks of the season, he has remained unbeaten thereafter. OLOP will hope that Daniel's progress will mirror that of his namesake who is now winning regular trebles in Division 1 just two seasons after his Division 6 success.

Let us now take a closer look at all the teams in the Division, starting with bottom-placed Berks Sports 'B' and working up the table.

### **Berks Sports 'B'**

This has been a tough season for John Fuller's team, partly because of John's own unavailability. Since returning to the team after a lengthy absence in Week 9, John hasn't

## LEADING AVERAGES

Player	Team	P	W	%
Mick Grantham	Post Office 'C'	21	21	100
Dave Aust	Sonning C&P 'H'	21	20	95.24
Richard Green	Birch Copse 'B'	24	22	91.67
Daniel McTiernan	OLOP 'J'	27	24	88.89
Krzysztof Cwiek	Polish 'C'	20	17	85
Marek Biegaj	Polish 'C'	19	16	84.21
Marcin Kolat	Polish 'C'	22	18	81.82
Linda Davis	Post Office 'C'	21	17	80.95
AJ Read	Kingfisher 'J'	33	26	78.79
Darek Kaminski	Polish 'D'	29	22	75.86
John Scott	BBC Club	12	9	75
John Gatward	Post Office 'C'	18	13	72.22

managed to find last season's form and points have so far proved elusive. However, one bright note has been the sporadic form of Sue Brownhill who managed two excellent singles wins in the 7-3 defeat to highly placed Birch Copse 'B' in Week 11. If Sue can repeat that form and John regain his, then surely Berks Sports will break their duck in the second half of the season.

### BBC Club

Useful points in recent weeks have come from a victory over Berks Sports and a draw with Tilehurst Methodists. The win was largely down to a John Scott treble. John has only played four matches for BBC this half, which might in part explain the team's modest points total. His 75% record in these matches place him 11th in the current averages. Also in the averages is Phil Peat, thanks to a great treble in the 5-5 draw with Tilehurst Meths. Phil also partnered Dave Pearson to a doubles win to secure a valuable point.

### Tilehurst Methodists 'E'

It has been a bit of a struggle lately for Tilehurst Meths as demonstrated by only one win and five points to date - though with a game in hand. But with three players all close to 50% in the averages, it is easy to see why they are the team with the most draws - three so far this season. One of these came in Week 7 against Kingfisher 'J' thanks to singles wins against the opposition number 3, a brilliant straight set doubles win and a hard fought singles victory by Lean Guan against Simon Guard. The 14-12 fifth set win was all the more praiseworthy as Simon has a 70% record in this Division to date.

### Polish 'D'

Derek Kaminski has been the mainstay for this Polish team, having secured 22 singles wins from 29 matches played. His wins have come against some of the division's top players, including, early on, young Daniel McTiernan. However, having one star player doesn't always translate into points and this Polish team's four wins have come against the three sides placed below them plus one against a two man Springfield 'C'. Against the middle and top placed teams they have

struggled so far.

### Springfield 'B'

Week 11 proved a massive bonus for Springfield 'B' as leaders Polish 'C' were held to a 5-5 draw, the first point dropped by the Polish team all season. Admittedly, the absence of a third player contributed, but Chris Speight beat Marcin Kolat in five sets and Jeff Morgan managed a four set win over Tomasz Odolski to upset the form book. It could have been even worse for Polish as Chris lost deuce in the fifth to Tomasz and Ray Morrell lost 11-9 in the fifth set to Marcin. Apart from this match it has been a mixed start to the season for this team. Getting everyone on form on the same night has proved tricky, as witnessed by Ray Morrell's treble against Springfield 'C' in another 5-5 draw.

### Springfield 'C'

Locked together with their 'B' team in joint 7th place is possibly an under-achievement for Springfield 'C' judging by last season. One factor in the points differential must be that Nigel Outhwaite has played only half his team's matches to date, though he has managed a respectable 71% win rate. Dan Mortimer and Colin Jones have been reasonably consistent but the top teams have had a little more strength in depth. Only one win since my last report after week 6 suggests that they might struggle unless Nigel and Dan start winning on the same night.

### Sonning Common & Peppard 'H'

Sonning could be a danger team to one of the division leaders as they have Dave Aust and improving Liam McGarvey. Dave has already done some damage, winning all three in the narrow 6-4 defeat to Polish 'C'. His only defeat so far this season came against Mick Grantham of Post Office 'C' in another close fought defeat. Although they slipped up slightly in their drawn match against Tilehurst Meths, five wins so far for Sonning represents a good return and I would not be

Team	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Polish 'C'	11	10	1	0	82	28	21
Post Office 'C'	11	9	0	2	78	32	18
OLOP 'J'	11	7	0	4	66	44	14
Birch Copse 'B'	11	6	2	3	61	49	14
Kingfisher 'J'	11	5	2	4	57	53	12
Sonning C&P 'H'	10	5	1	4	53	47	11
Springfield 'C'	10	4	2	4	54	46	10
Springfield 'B'	10	4	2	4	49	51	10
Polish 'D'	11	4	0	7	47	63	8
Tilehurst Meths 'E'	10	1	3	6	38	62	5
BBC Club	11	2	1	8	35	75	5
Berks Sports 'B'	11	0	0	11	20	90	0

surprised to see them finish in fourth place at the end of the season.

#### Kingfisher 'J'

With AJ Read and Simon Guard playing regularly, this team will always win more than they lose. However, they have suffered from lack of wins by a third singles player and from a below-par doubles record. The highlight remains AJ's treble over Birch Copse, including a five set win over Richard Green - one of only two singles defeats for Richard this season.

#### Birch Copse 'B'

Mainly thanks to the form of Richard Green, Birch Copse continue to punch above their weight in this Division. Their biggest win by far was in Week 10 when playing away at Post Office 'C'. Richard's treble was backed up by two great singles wins from Bradley Fullbrook. Richard and Bradley also took the doubles and a famous victory was sealed. With only a four points separating them from second place, promotion is still an outside possibility.

#### OLOP 'J'

OLOP have stormed up the table following a sequence of wins dating back to Week 5. Unfortunately for them, the sequence ended on 18th December when OLOP lost a rearranged fixture 8-2 to Sonning. This could yet prove significant as OLOP were looking favourites to challenge Post Office for the second promotion spot. I have already commented on the brilliant form of Daniel McTiernan. He missed the Sonning defeat and must be ever-present if OLOP are to challenge Post Office for second place. Mention also for Tony Lee-White and Adam McTiernan who

have both improved noticeably during the season and have highly respectable 67% averages.

#### Post Office 'C'

The much anticipated title battle between Post Office and Polish 'C' in week 9 did not disappoint as home team, Post Office, were pipped 6-4. Mick Grantham contributed his usual three singles wins but Pat and Linda Davis managed only one further singles win between them. The key matches were Linda's deuce in the fifth defeat to Marcin Kolat and a 3-2 doubles defeat despite being 2-1 up and looking comfortable. This would not have been the end of Post Office title hopes had it not been for a 6-4 defeat in week 10 to Birch Copse – already reported on above. Now Post Office must hope that Polish slip up or lower expectations and keep ahead of OLOP in the race for second.

#### Polish 'C'

Apart from the slip up against Springfield 'B', Polish 'C' have been superb this season. Every player has contributed to their well earned success – rising to the plate whenever it has been required. The value of having three strong players has been demonstrated and for Marcin Kolat (82%) and Tomasz Odolski (62%) to be their third and fourth ranked players – behind Marek Biegaj (84%) and Krzysztof Cwiek (85%) – says it all. I am going to stick my neck out now and say that Polish will hold on to win this Division 6 title (not my bravest prediction!!).

It only remains for me to wish all players in Division 6 a fabulous Christmas and a successful and enjoyable New Year.

Duncan Groves

## YOUTH PLAYERS ROUND-UP

### Reading gain Carter Cup Final Qualification

Defending Champions, Reading, represented by OLOP Impact players Daniel Moses and Liam McTiernan won their Carter Cup zone qualifying event in Bournemouth at the weekend. The Carter Cup is the premier English leagues junior (Under 18) boys team event.

Following the late withdrawal of Brighton 'B', the new look Reading team faced strong opposition from Poole 'A' and Poole 'B' for a place in the national final next May.

The first match pitted Reading against favourites Poole 'A'. Unsurprisingly, Nathan Bingham, ranked 80th best Junior in England, beat 12 year old debutant Liam, ranked some 60 places lower, in straight sets. Meanwhile Daniel, Reading league's No 1 junior boy, got the better of Poole 'A's Stephen Foster by a score of three sets to one.

The doubles proved to be the best



DANIEL MOSES AND LIAM McTIERNAN

contest of the day with Reading gaining a deserved 2-1 lead only to let it slip, eventually going down 3-2.

Going into the reverse singles behind, both Reading players had to win to keep their qualification hopes alive. Liam got off to a flyer against Stephen and powered home his advantage, winning in stylish fashion 11-1 in the third set and thus claiming his first ever competitive victory over a top 100 English junior. Daniel faced an in-form Nathan and played exceptionally well to seal a 3-1 win and round off a fine opening victory for the Reading team.

In the second match against Poole 'B', Liam started in tremendous fashion, courageously coming back from a two set deficit, to beat Dorset's No1 junior, Matt Haynes, 3-2 (8-11,811,11-9,11-9,11-9). Unfortunately, Daniel couldn't keep up the momentum, unexpectedly going down 3-2 against the lower ranked Michael Robertson.

The Reading boys bounced back well

in the doubles however, thrillingly taking it 3-1. In the reverse singles, both Reading players fought hard to dispatch their opponents 3-1 and win the match four sets to one to top the qualifying group and progress through to the national final in Derbyshire.

Reading team's award-winning coach, Alan Dines, praised the Reading lads for their high standard of play and fighting spirit. He added that they had represented the Reading and District Table Tennis League with impeccable decorum and wished them well in the defence of the title next year.

### Knights Repel Raiders

Kingfisher Knights won their second successive match beating Sonning Common Raiders 4-1. George Dodd was unbeaten for the Knights with good wins over Liam McGarvey and Michael Legg. Connor Manley won one and shared in a nail biting 3-1 doubles win with Michael Houghton. It was left to McGarvey to save the whitewash in what turned out to be the best set of the match – the Raiders' player winning 13-11, 11-7, 7-11, 9-11, 6-11. IMPACT Thunderbolts suffered a shock defeat at the hands of IMPACT Panthers, despite a maximum from Thunderbolt's Hanson Xu. Siad Cole, (playing up) performed with credit but lost out in close encounters with Gus Thomis and Daniel McTiernan. The doubles decider went to the wire with Panthers edging home 3-2 to gain a memorable victory. IMPACT Eagles proved just too good for Woodley Hammers, despite all the efforts of Daniel Clark and Phillip Saunders. Daniel Groves and guest player Stephen Thomson recorded maximums for the Eagles.

Division Two highlights saw a cracking encounter between Sonning Common Avengers and IMPACT Attackers. Tian Savage led the way for Attackers with wins over Matthew Chapman and Charlie Brown. Liam Peachey and Chapman responded with hard fought wins over Joshua Gallen to make all square with the doubles to play. Gallen and Savage were made to fight all the way before taking the doubles and the match by a 3-2 score line. The Sonning Common Derby between Tigers and Thunderbolts

ended all square after the singles. Earlier Tigers star Zach Attfield had recorded a brace of wins only for Max Sweetman to respond with a maximum for Thunderbolts. Attfield teamed up with Danny Dockree to take the doubles and snatch a win for the Tigers.

### Knights Bring Down Eagles

Kingfisher Knights made a good start to phase two of the Youth League Division One title race with a good 4-2 win over IMPACT Eagles. George Dodd led the way with wins over newcomer Daniel Groves and Danny Ricks. Stephen Thompson and Michael Houghton weighed in with one win each. The Eagles replied with Ricks defeat of Houghton. In the evening's best-contested set, Groves just got the better of Thomson. In a hard fought match where no fewer than three sets went to a deciding fifth game IMPACT Panthers defeated luckless Woodley Hammers by a 5-1 score line. Daniel McTiernan and Tian Savage (playing up) were unbeaten for the Panthers. Phillip Saunders hit back for the Hammers and was a shade unlucky to lose out in a great five game set against Savage. In a match with many fine sets, yet another Panthers reserve, Gus Thomis, came back from 2-0 down to defeat ace defender Daniel Clark. Sonning Common Raiders, despite some brave resistance from Liam McGarvey and Michael Legg, were beaten 5-0 by IMPACT Thunderbolts.

In Division Two, Sonning Common Avengers were beaten 4-2 by Sonning Common Tigers for which Zach Attfield and Danny Dockree were undefeated. The Avengers hit back with wins from Charlie Brown and Liam Peachey. Finally in this week's League matches, Sonning Common Thunderbolts stormed to a 6-0 win over IMPACT Trojans. Thomas Burrow and Joshua Gallen performed well for the Trojans taking Rowan Stacey and Gus Thurlow to deciding games. Seven year old Lorcan Gallen also played with credit but none could match the power play of Thunderbolt star Max Sweetman.

The Youth League takes a break until 9th January 2009.



## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



*A letter from Chris Andrews, whose recent book "Table Tennis - an Overview" was reviewed in our November edition, by Nick Heaps. Nick criticised the book for not living up to some of the claims made for it.*

Dear Editor

Thank you having my book "Table Tennis an Overview" reviewed in your District Association's Newsletter. I would like to say that Richard Pettit's review in the Table Tennis News, April 2008 gives a fairer opinion of my book.

The book itself is aimed primarily at the 20 million people who play for fun and in particularly those fun players who wish to improve their table tennis. The idea of the book is to create more players at the real grass roots level. If you are a complete beginner to table tennis and have no access to a club or coach but

have a table at home, then this book will improve you as a table tennis player and increase your knowledge of table tennis. Someone thinking of making the step up from beginner to entering a club for the first time will find the book useful and will not have to ask lots of basic questions about table tennis. Many clubs do not cater for beginner adults and this book gives these players a chance to play better. If your interested in table tennis statistics or thoughts on how to increase the level of participants in your local league or club then the book supplies this as well. Ex European Champion, John Hilton's tips on how to play against combination bat players will help intermediate players.

Yours

Chris Andrews

**Readers - Do write in if you think there is something worth saying that hasn't appeared yet. Send in your piece through the 'comments' box on the Newsletter page of the RDTTA web site - and you can raise quite a new subject if you like. Or put up an article. Please stick to the guidelines, though - 400 words maximum except by prior arrangement with the editor.**



# STILL PLAYING IN THE LEAGUE AT 80



For **Dave Jones**, it seems 80 is the new 60. Dave, who plays for Tilehurst Methodists 'D' in Division 5, celebrated his 80th birthday in the past year.

Dave played for Woodlands back in 1965, and progressed up to Division One. Later he played for NIRD before joining Tilehurst Meths in about 2000.

But that wasn't the limit of Dave's contribution to the sport. He was the father of four daughters who all took up table tennis - Elaine, Alison, Deborah and Carole; and Carole (Chard) still plays for Kingfisher 'E' in Div 2.

In 1989-190, Dave won the John Freeman trophy for a 100% average throughout the season.

*Nigel Rowland*

**Gordon Ayres** (born on 23rd March 1928) was another who started off playing for Woodlands Club in Tilehurst - back in about 1944, according to the recollection of his son Ian, who now plays for Sonning C&P 'D'.

Gordon was with Woodlands for several years; then had a couple of years' break; then joined Sonning Common and Peppard. He was with the new club for a goodly period before joining Milestone for a couple of years. Then in the early 90s his long-time employer the BBC put a team in the league and he joined that - and has been with them ever since

At Woodlands he played as high as division three and for other clubs mostly division 4, 5 and then 6. For BBC he regularly played for Maidenhead League too. He currently plays for BBC Club in division 6. He has had a few times as divisional secretary and positions on club committees over the years

*Ian Ayres*



**Colin 'Taffy' Thomas** was born on the 5th December 1928 and recently joined the élite group who have reached that golden age and are still playing League Table Tennis.

Colin was a late comer to the game, starting in 1963 by playing for Purley. He enjoyed earlier success, for in that year he reached the semi final of the Individual Handicap Competition, when he drew Simon Heaps. Being excited about playing a junior international Colin with a 9 start elected to serve, which turned out to be his downfall.

Colin has played for Purley, Kentwood, Tidmarsh and now plays Pangbourne WMC 'B' IN Division 5.

On reflection Colin wishes he had started playing earlier and had taken the game more seriously. He has made many friends through the game, a player who has never lost his temper and always plays with a smile on his face, a wonderful ambassador for the sport.

*Geoff Chivers*

If anyone knows of any more 80-year-olds still playing in the Reading league - please let us know!

## “Banks in Turmoil” ?

Nick Heaps sent in this entry for the action photo of the year contest, if there is such a thing.



It was taken at the Newcastle Grand Prix in October. It's from a 2nd round mens singles match against Andrew Wilkinson (from Northumberland and currently ranked 44 on the England seniors list) in which Mark lost by the narrowest of margins (11-8 in the 5th), after having already beaten Greg Letts of Australia (ranked 947 in the world) in the 1st round.