

February 2019



R&DTTA

READING & DISTRICT TABLE TENNIS ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER Editor: Derek Wavell

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Snowdrop time - and in the table tennis world, tournament time. First the Individual Handicap, then the Reading Closed (seniors and juniors), then the Reading Masters (seniors and juniors) too, and after that club tournaments.

In the past the Newsletter may have skimmed on the Individual Handicap, but this time we make up by getting all our photos of players from there, 58 photos - is that a record? Melvyn Lovegrove was our ace photographer - and sent loads of players from all divisions.

You'll find variety here - with a really succinct overview of Division One by Mark Banks - where Kingfisher teams are comfortably ensconced at the top - but with Sonning Common snapping at their heels. Springfield teams are at the top of both Two and Three, with Milestone in second places. Then turn to Division Four if you want a blow-by-blow account of just about every match by Martin Wetherell.

And do call on the Berkshire Inter-Town Tournament, excellently reported by Duncan Groves. Reading won, by a mile.

Play well!

Derek

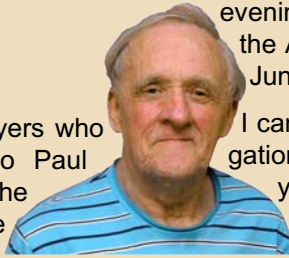


Notes from our Chairman

by Derek Harrison

Hello Everybody,

I would like to start by asking the players who won returnable trophies to get them to Paul Treadgold ASAP if you have not done so. The details on where to take them are on the website. Thank you,



I would also like to remind you that the presentation evening will be held at O.L.O.P on the 7th May and that the A G M will be held at the same place on the 5th June.

I can see by the website that the promotion and relegation places are very tight so i hope all goes well for you all in the run in.

All the Best

Derek

SENIOR READING CLOSED WINNERS 2019

Men's Singles	Winner	Elson Costa	Runner up	Hari Gehlot
Men's Doubles	Winners	Mark Banks & Hari Gehlot		
	Runners up	Antony Baker & Jeremy Willis		
Ladies' Singles	Winner	Gwynne Penny	Runner up	Louise Foster
Veterans Singles	Winner	Elson Costa	Runner up	Mark Banks
Senior Vets	Winner	Hari Gehlot	Runner up	Andy Wang
Ping Pong	Winner	Roger Pritchard	Runner up	Graham Mendick
Sixty Plus	Winner	Paul Savage	Runner up	John Willcocks
Div One	Winner	Hari Gehlot	Runner up	Antony Baker
Div Two	Winner	Graham Mendick	Runner up	Paul Savage
Div Three	Winner	Eric Van Looy	Runner up	Benedict Carless
Div Four	Winner	Ralph Philips	Runner up	Stephen Christelow

Bob Woodmansee played his 2,000th individual set for Sonning Sports in their match against SC&P D this week, his first set being way back in 1978.



In his 2,000th set he played Eric Walker (L) and Bob recovered from losing the first two games to eventually win 11-2 in the fifth which was a fitting way to mark the occasion.

I am sure there are a small number of players who have played more sets than Bob but it is still a great achievement. Plus with the exception of Nigel Maltby there may not be any other players who have a complete record of their playing career.

John Willcocks

Message from the Trophy Secretary

Those teams who win any titles/cups and wish to have a trophy for each of their team members are respectfully reminded that the Reading League will fund a maximum of four per team.

Therefore, any in excess of this number will have to be ordered by contacting me and indeed paid for by the team in question.

Paul Treadgold 01256 959751 07821 595982



DIVISION ONE

by Mark Banks

Hello again. And welcome to your favourite newsletter. Hope you're all enjoying your season as we reach the 3/4 point. Just 5 or 6 matches to go and pretty most things are virtually decided. Kingfisher 'A' are our champions elect and Milestone are destined for the drop along with KFD. Sorry it's brief this time around but hope you all have a good one whatever you are doing and see you all very soon.



Love & Peace x

Cruising through to the title are **Kingfisher 'A'** who are pretty much there now. Hariiiiiiii has still just lost the one to Martin Adams. The other 4 Dimitry, Krasi, Sagar and Elson in particular after his exploits at the Closed are all in tip top form too and players of that calibre don't lose many at this level.

MVP: Hari Gehlot



MARTIN ADAMS

We in **Kingfisher 'B'** (reigning champions by the way, in case you'd forgotten – I'm gonna keep writing that until it's mathematically impossible to catch A) have of course settled for 2nd place this time around. Martin has been as brilliant as ever but we've lost Artur back to the Ukraine. Myself and Richie Rich are now injury free touch wood so you'd better watch out!

MVP: Martin Adams



JEREMY WILLIS

Sonning Common & Peppard 'A' still going well. J R, Gary all brilliant. Neil has told literally everybody and I mean everybody how he beat Wang and Malcolm has been showing that he still has the odd good performance in him too with a couple of notable scalps. Joe Joes has been having a good season and shows how much he loves (or doesn't love) a 5th set.

MVP: Gary Morgan



LUCA BIANCHI OF KINGFISHER D



JULIAN TELFORD

Still doing really well then are **KFC** who have been pretty much 4th all season - a big gap opening up between them and 5th. Nigel has played well all year, Alan has picked up some great wins, brilliant to see Richard back and playing well and Phil is as solid as ever. Ivor unfortunately is currently out of action.

MVP: Nigel Keedy



TIM RABY OF SC&P C

Sonning Common & Peppard 'B' still the surprise package of the season and what a season they are having. Andy Wang still the standout player and officially the most improved player in the world. Nigel – brilliant. Maximums all over the place and Jeremy and Brian have picked up some good wins in recent weeks too.

MVP: Andy Wang



GRANT WHEATLEY OF KINGFISHER D

		PL	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
1	Kingfisher A	15	15	0	0	131	19	131
2	Kingfisher B	16	15	0	1	124	36	124
3	SC&P A	16	11	1	4	107	53	107
4	Kingfisher C	15	11	0	4	101	49	101
5	SC&P B	17	8	4	5	92	78	92
6	Tidmarsh B	16	6	3	7	71	89	71
7	Tidmarsh A	15	5	2	8	66	84	66
8	Curzon Club A	16	4	2	10	63	97	63
9	Kennet Valley A	15	3	1	11	57	93	57
10	SC&P C	16	3	4	9	53	107	53
11	Kingfisher D	17	3	1	13	45	125	45
12	Milestone A	16	0	4	12	40	120	40

The private battle between **Tidmarsh 'A'** and **Tidmarsh 'B'** continues. Squirrel – playing out of his nutshells. Super stuff. Lee has had a good season too. Simon still holding his own and the Webbs keep plugging along. Murgy still the man for A but Duncan has been giving him a run for his money in recent matches. John, Mike, Dave, Bazza and François have all made contributions this season.

MVP: Murgy & Squirrel

Sonning Common & Peppard 'C' will be fine. Denise Weller, the two Matts, Tim and Niall just about doing enough to keep them in Div 1 TT next season. Good to see.

MVP: Denise Weller

Curzon 'A' also have had a pretty good few weeks and are well away from any trouble. John W is now back from injury but Pete has hurt his back bless him. Good max for Jon vs KV.

MVP: Jon Willis



MATTHEW ISHERWOOD OF SONNING COMMON AND PEPPARD C

Everybody's favourites **Kennet Valley Free Church 'A'** have pretty much secured their D1 status too. When he's not munching on a bacon butty or badgering me to get the scores up on the website Julian has actually played some pretty decent stuff for him. Cath in particular and Masoud have picked up at just the right time too. Nice work.

MVP: Julian Telford

Still a struggle for **Kingfisher 'D'** and the drop to D2 is pretty imminent. Clive, Grant, Willis, Luca and Guy are all on the scoreboard though and are deffo enjoying their time.

MVP: Grant Wheatley

LEADING AVERAGES

Player	Team	PL	W	
Martin Adams	Kingfisher B	36	36	100.00%
Artur Morar	Kingfisher B	15	15	100.00%
Hari Gehlot	Kingfisher A	38	37	97.37%
Dmitry Khakhamov	Kingfisher A	21	20	95.24%
Sagar Sawant	Kingfisher A	29	26	89.66%
Mark Banks	Kingfisher B	38	34	89.47%
Andy Wang	SC&P B	45	40	88.89%
Krasimir Ivanov	Kingfisher A	24	21	87.50%
Anthony Baker	Tidmarsh B	30	25	83.33%
Gary Morgan	SC&P A	21	17	80.95%
Neil Hurford	SC&P A	24	18	75.00%

And bringing up the rear as they have all season are **Milestone 'A'** with the drop to D2 inevitable. Very nice team though. I like these guys and maybe if Graham had been in from the start the story may have been different. I'm sure we will see them again and hope you enjoy the rest of your season.

MVP: Sanket



ZOLTAN KELEMEN OF MILESTONE A

Lower Divisions KO Cup - 2018-19

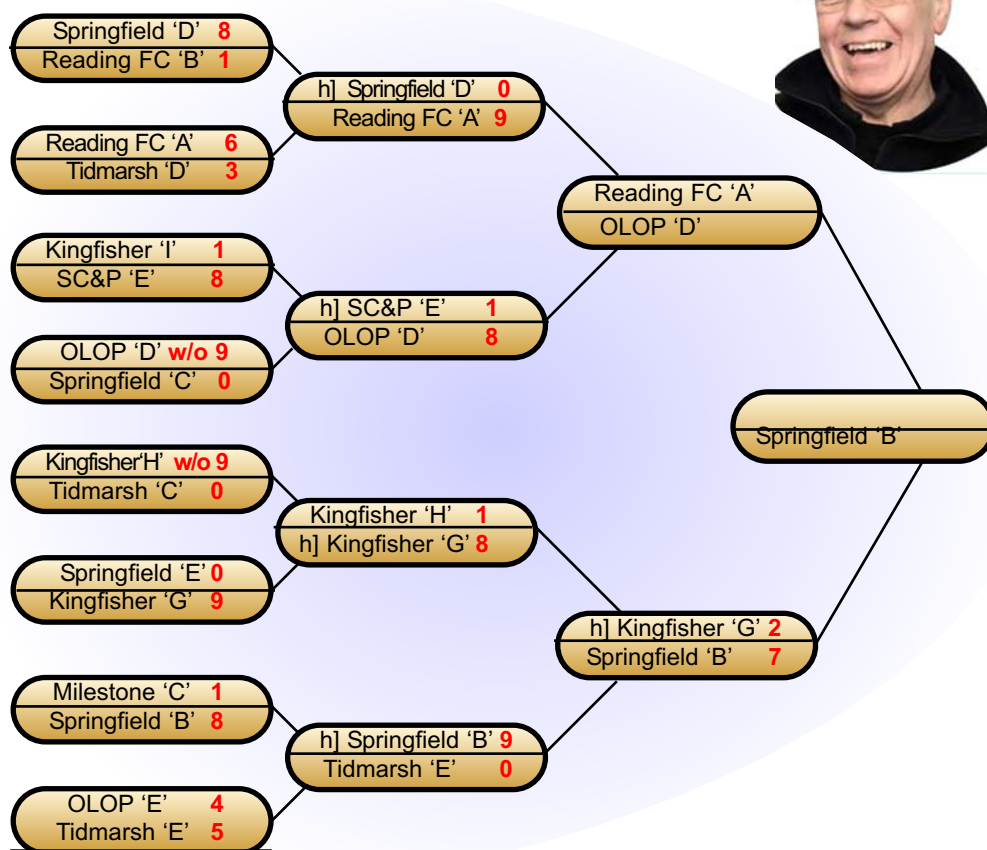
organised by Ray Webb

With Tidmarsh 'E' having to concede their match with Springfield 'B' due to last minute player availability, this left only one fixture completed at the Quarter Final stage. Here OLOP 'D' prevailed against SC&P 'E'. After sharing the opening two sets and the third set just going OLOP's way in a third game decider, Sonning were unable to make any further impression on the match, eventually succumbing 1 - 8.

Against all expectations the first semi final saw Springfield 'B' triumph 7 - 2 over much fancied Kingfisher 'G'. Going into the match Kingfisher had a League doubles success rating of 75% compared to 69% for Springfield. Kingfisher's 75% was also achieved using a number of different pairings whereas Springfield heavily favoured the pairing of Rob Wilkie / Steve Leggett. Rob / Steve accounting for eight of their eleven sets won, losing only once, to a strong Tilehurst

Methodist side. To further tip the likelihood of winning in Kingfisher's favour, Springfield would not use the Rob / Steve pairing in the match. As it turned out a maximum from Seth Martin / Rob Wilkie together with braces from Seth / Peter Gurney and Peter / Rob, saw Springfield through to the final.

In the second Semi-Final OLOP 'D' will face Reading FC 'A' and based on their League performance, having only won 38% of doubles played, could find it tough going against a Reading side with a 57% success rate. Reading also claimed both head-to-head wins. Interestingly the pairings used most in the league, Ben Carless / Graham Stark for OLOP and Tony Alleyne / Wayne Alleyne for Reading have both played seven times, winning only twice. Logically this match should see a Reading win, but as witnessed in the first semi-final, results do not always go as predicted.



Team Handicap Competition 2018-19

organised by Ray Webb

The match that completed the Second Round fixtures saw Springfield 'C' triumph 5 - 4 over Milestone 'C', a result they then repeated against OLOP 'DA' in the Quarter Final. In both matches Springfield had been 4 - 3 behind but fought back, through strong individual performances, to win 5 - 4. Having earlier progressed through Round One when fielding only two players, it seems that Rob's side somehow manage to defy all the odds and get through.

The remaining Quarter Final matches saw two further tight 5 - 4 wins; for Springfield 'B' against SC&P 'B' and

Reading FC 'A' over Kingfisher 'E', plus a 6 - 3 OLOP 'DB' win at Tidmarsh 'D'. Springfield 'B', who have fielded the same trio throughout the tournament so far, took all the crucial sets that went to three games, in a match where none of their players could topple Sonning C&P's Jamie Legg.

Reading FC 'A' who likewise have kept an unchanged side almost let slip a 4 - 2 lead before rallying to finally take set nine. Antony Alleyne's single backed up two apiece from Richard Witt and Wayne Alleyne, to see Reading through.

Although Mark Carless will go down as 'Player Of the Match' for his maximum in OLOP's win over Tidmarsh, the



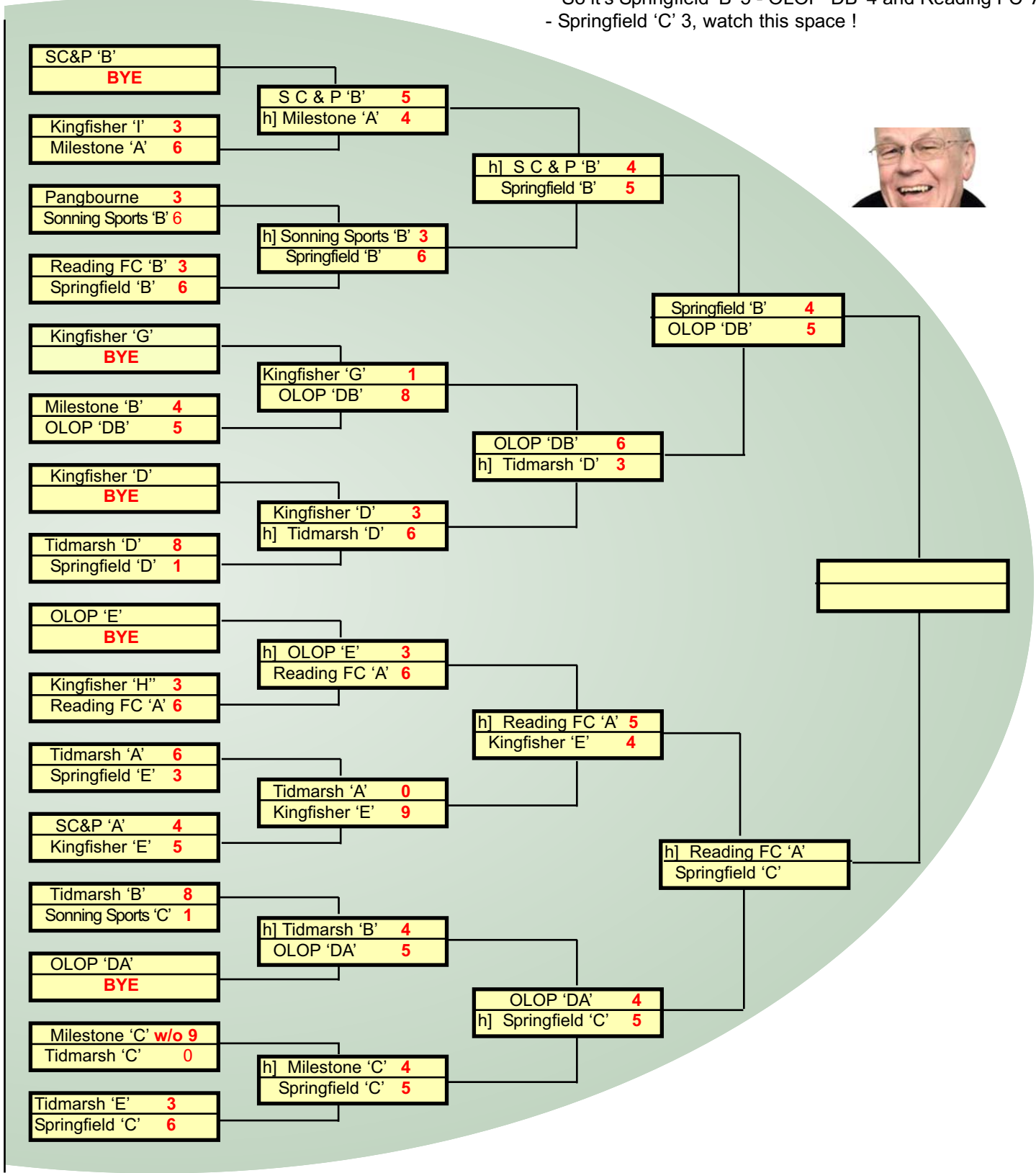
most remarkable set of the match was undoubtedly Ben's 13-21, 22-20, 25-23 win over Thereasa Watson.

And so to the Semi-Finals, of which neither will be played before this report needs to be submitted. As all four teams currently play in League division three it gives the opportunity to make some 'calculated' predictions, [which will more than likely turn out to be embarrassingly wrong]. The head to head league fixtures saw 8 - 2 wins for both Springfield 'B' against OLOP 'D' and Reading FC 'A' against Springfield 'C'.

With only Mark Carless of the OLOP 'DB' team to feature in the match against Springfield 'B' it's difficult to predict the outcome, although Mark, taking his handicap into consideration, should pick up at least two sets. When factoring in how Player Rankings have changed since the start of the season, this would suggest a narrow 5 - 4 Springfield victory.

In the Reading / Springfield 'C' match, Player Ranking changes suggest a tight win for Reading FC 'A', although the handicap factor suggests a slightly more comfortable win.

So it's Springfield 'B' 5 - OLOP 'DB' 4 and Reading FC 'A' 6 - Springfield 'C' 3, watch this space !



Obituary: Jim Stokes (Senior)



RDTTA members will be saddened to hear of the sudden and unexpected death of Jim Stokes (senior) on 3rd January 2019 at the age of 73.

Jim played and coached in Reading for many years from 1969 until the mid-1990s for Kingfisher, Gillette, MOSS and most recently for the Curzon Club, before moving to Preston. He also served on the RDTTA Committee in various positions from 1978-1991.

Following his playing career, Jim went on to coach several players, including his son Jimmy Stokes and was the Coaching Officer at Kingfisher Table Tennis Club from 1990 to 1996. Throughout the 90's Jim helped a succession of young players throughout the Berkshire area to improve, with some going on to win junior and senior international honours with England. Big Jim's table tennis influence touched so many players.

Jim was the driving force for the Gillette Reading Team in the British National League and he played a big part in the renovation of the Kingfisher Club.

Jim was a very caring, generous and likeable man, who will be greatly missed.

My friend Jim:

Jean and I moved into the house next-door to Jim and Gwen Stokes, in Woodley, in November 1969. Jim had his own plumbing and central heating business, most of it being undertaken - at that time - in London. Our friendship really started the following Easter, when Jim told me that he had been a keen youth club table tennis player. We went down to my office, in Queens Road, and after an evening swatting the little white ball, finished up in 'The Lyndhurst' where Jim was amazed to discover that civil servants enjoyed a pint! Jim really caught the table tennis bug and got very friendly with Simon Heaps: Jim's perseverance and will to win became more evident, especially when he switched to anti-loop rubber. Jim won the Berkshire Closed and was runner-up in the Reading Closed singles, losing to his twelve year old son (also Jim) who had started playing on his eighth birthday and supplanted Simon Heaps as youngest winner. When accused of letting Jimmy win big Jim pointed out that he had given his all and had sweated off several pounds in a truly hard-fought match.

There are many players in the Reading area who owe their proficiency in table tennis to Jim Stokes. He was a brilliant coach, making his charges work their socks off but always with a sense of humour. He had his hairy moments: on a family holiday in the Pyrenees the brakes on his Rover failed going down the mountainside and the family were only saved when he managed to stop the car on a cattle track. This was on the way home: the family also survived a rockfall on the Spanish border when they had taken refuge from a mighty thunderstorm. A holiday to remember.

Jim was also instrumental in the foundation of the Kingfisher Club, using his plumbing skills to good effect. Jim always put his money where his mouth was. He and Gwen eventually moved up to the Preston area, where they were closer to their children and grandchildren. He has not been at his physical best for some time, suffering from gout and various other ailments. They paid regular visits to Berkshire to see family. He was good company and enjoyed his wine. We never lost touch, and my heart goes out to Gwen and all the family.

Jim, we will all miss you. It was a privilege to be your friend. Local table tennis owes you a lot. You will not be forgotten. Sleep well, old friend.

Robin Arthur Lockwood.

Life Vice-President, Reading and District Table Tennis Association.



DIVISION TWO

by John Willcocks

There have been no great changes at the top and bottom of the division since my last report, although there has been a bit of movement among the pack in the middle of the table. Springfield 'A' and Milestone 'B' still look like finishing in the two promotion places but Springfield 'A' have opened up a healthy lead at the top and looks odds on to win the title. Milestone still have a reasonable advantage over the chasing teams and should hang onto second place



As in the first half of the season there have been a lot of close results and this has helped to ensure that

of them have been 6 – 4, they also had a surprising 8 – 2 defeat to Sonning Sports 'A'. This sequence of results has dented their slight title hopes and it now looks almost certain that they will have to settle for the runners up spot. It's possible they could still be caught by the chasing pack but they look to have too much strength in depth for that to happen especially as they have still to play most of the teams in the bottom half. After a slightly sticky patch Graham Mendick is now back to his best form and Daniel Wills has started playing again after missing a couple of months of the season.

Prediction – Runners Up

Best Recent Performance – Jordan Huang winning a very close set in five against Phil Burke

OLOP 'C' have suffered from the old DFS's curse. In the last newsletter I tipped them with a chance to catch Milestone and finish second. Since then they have surprisingly lost five matches in a row which is in sharp contrast to their run before Christmas when they won six in a row. This losing streak has ended any hopes they had of challenging for the runners up spot and they will have to settle for a mid-table position. Two of the defeats were against the top two with a heavy one against Springfield 'A' being followed by a 6 - 4 against Milestone 'B'. They have also suffered 7 - 3 losses to the other two OLOP sides and SC&P 'D', and the battle to see which of the OLOP

		PL	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
1	Springfield A	16	12	1	3	117	43	117
2	Milestone B	16	13	0	3	100	60	100
3	OLOP A	15	7	3	5	86	64	86
4	Kingfisher F	16	8	2	6	86	74	86
5	OLOP C	16	8	1	7	80	80	80
6	SC&P D	16	6	3	7	76	84	76
7	Sonning Sports A	14	6	3	5	73	67	73
8	OLOP B	15	6	3	6	73	77	73
9	Tilehurst Meths A	15	5	4	6	72	78	72
10	Pangbourne WMC	15	4	4	7	69	81	69
11	Curzon Club B	16	2	2	12	54	106	54
12	Kingfisher E	16	1	4	11	44	116	44

movement in the league table has been fairly limited. Kingfisher 'E' and Curzon 'B' have not improved their positions so they are still clear favourites to occupy the relegation places.

There are some postponed matches which have not yet been rearranged. Could the team captains please try to agree new dates as soon as possible?

Springfield 'A' suffered a surprise 6 - 4 defeat to Sonning Sports 'A' in the free week just before Christmas. However, since then have had four good wins and they have lost closely to promotion rivals Milestone 'B'. Despite the two setbacks they have managed to increase their lead at the top and look destined to be, as far as I know, the first Springfield side to play in Division 1. Their three players are continuing to play well, although Adam Sheen suffered a rare duck against Milestone 'B'. Phil Burke has lost a couple of times but has had some very good wins as well and even having to play reserves in two matches has not dented their momentum.

Prediction – 1st

Best Recent Performance – Phil Burke winning a classic encounter in five against Graham Mendick

Milestone 'B' have had four wins recently but three



JORDAN HUANG

teams finishes highest could go all the way to the last week. Binit Bhaskar has been their most in-form player recently and he won two in the matches against the top two.

Prediction – 6th

Best Recent Performance – Binit Bhaskar with a comprehensive three straight win over Adam Sheen.

Kingfisher 'F' have had some mixed results lately. A draw and a close defeat to two of the OLOP teams was followed by a good 7 - 3 win against Tilehurst



ROGER PRITCHARD

Meths 'A' and an 8 - 2 win against Curzon 'B'. Despite another Roger Pritchard maximum they then lost closely to a Sonning Sports 'A'. However, with OLOP 'C' losing regularly they have moved into third place although the gap between them and second looks to be just a bit too much to make up. Roger Pritchard continues to be their best player but the whole squad have been contributing some good wins.

Prediction – 4th

Best Recent Performance – Roger Pritchard with a great win in four over Paul Savage

Tilehurst Meths 'A' have not won since early December but this run has not been too damaging as the matches they have lost have been fairly close. They have drawn twice recently, one of those slightly surprisingly against Kingfisher 'E'. They are having a few player availability problems at the moment but with a reserve of the class and ability of Eric Van Looy available maybe that is not too much of a problem. They have dropped to the bottom of the mid table pack but could well move up a few places by the end of the season.

Prediction – 8th

Best Recent Performance – Eric Van Looy with impressive maximum against OLOP 'A'

SC&P 'D' have won twice recently and have had three defeats. Two of those defeats were against the top two and in both of those matches they gave a good account of themselves. All of their recent

LEADING AVERAGES				
Player	Team	P	W	%
Graham Mendick	Milestone B	39	35	89.74%
Phillip Burke	Springfield A	47	42	89.36%
Roger Pritchard	Kingfisher F	33	29	87.88%
Keith Winter	Tilehurst Meths A	30	26	86.67%
Paul Savage	Sonning Sports A	42	36	85.71%
Johnson Xu	OLOP B	27	21	77.78%
Chris West	OLOP A	42	32	76.19%
Clive Perry	OLOP A	27	20	74.07%
Adam Sheen	Springfield A	47	34	72.34%
Charlotte Binley	Curzon Club B	21	14	66.67%
Dave Godfrey	OLOP B	21	14	66.67%
Thomas Lewis	OLOP C	18	12	66.67%
John Simmonds	Pangbourne WMC	43	28	65.12%
Alan Mollett	SC&P D	30	19	63.33%
Jingshun Huang	Milestone B	24	15	62.50%
Nick Lean	Curzon Club B	33	20	60.61%

matches have been close and the points they have gained have taken them well clear of the relegation zone. Their recent wins were a hard-fought encounter against Curzon 'B' and a good 7 - 3 victory over OLOP 'C'. In their 6 - 4 defeat to Sonning Sports Angus Jones got a great maximum including inflicting a rare defeat onto Paul Savage.

Prediction 9th

Best Recent Performance Angus Jones with a remarkable three straight win over Paul Savage

OLOP 'B' have had a couple of matches postponed so they have only played three times since Christmas. They have won all three matches



JOHNSON XU OF OLOP B

although the results were all fairly close. Alistair Richardson and Johnson Xu have been picking up maximums and with their matches in hand they are another team who could challenge for third spot.

Prediction - 5th

Best Recent Performance – Alistair Richardson with good maximum at Pangbourne including comprehensive win over John Simmonds

OLOP 'A' are yet another team challenging for third place and they are probably favourites to finish in that position. Some solid performances have seen them unbeaten since the end of November and with matches in hand third place looks quite likely. A recent highlight was a good 7 - 3 win over their C team which featured a Chris West maximum. This was one of a number of good performances by Chris and he has been well supported by the rest of his team and by Clive Perry in particular

Prediction – 3rd

Best Recent Performance – Chris West with excellent maximum against OLOP 'C'

Sonning Sports 'A' have not lost since the beginning of December and have moved well up the table and they are now in the pack challenging for third spot. They have been bolstered by new signing Nick Sears and their improved form has seen them register great wins against the top two. In the win over the leaders Paul Savage inflicted a rare defeat onto Phil Burke and he then followed that by beating Graham Mendick in the 8 - 2 victory over



JOHN LITTLE OF KINGFISHER E

Milestone 'B'. Their one recent draw was surprisingly against Kingfisher 'E'. During their match against SC&P 'D' Bob Woodmansee reached an historic milestone, his 2,000 th singles set for the club. He marked this occasion in suitable fashion by winning the 2,000th set in five after being two games down.

Prediction – 7th

Best Recent Performance Paul Savage winning a five game thriller against Graham Mendick

Pangbourne WMC have had some solid results and have been picking up enough points to maintain a healthy gap between themselves and the relegation places. A win, two draws and two defeats since the last newsletter has seen them averaging nearly five points a match and if they keep anything like that



ABHAY GORE OF OLOP C

up for the rest of the season they will be fine. John Simmonds has continued to play well and he is receiving good support from Clive Taylor and Leroy Wilson.

Prediction 10th

Best Recent Performance – John Simmonds with a three-straight win over Chris West

Curzon 'B' Have had some reasonable results since Christmas but they have not been good enough to eat into the points difference between themselves and the teams above them. They had three fairly close defeats plus a slightly more comprehensive one to Kingfisher 'F'. Their one recent victory was a good 7 - 3 win against Kingfisher 'E' which saw Nick Lean get an excellent maximum. Charlotte Binley has only been able to play once since Christmas, hopefully she will be able to play more regularly during the remainder of the season which would be a boost for the team. Nick Lean has been very consistent and there have some good wins from the rest of the squad.

Prediction – 11th

Best Recent Performance Linda King with a three-straight win over Leroy Wilson

Kingfisher 'E' had a decent start to the second half of the season, picking up draws against Tilehurst Meths 'A' and Sonning Sports 'A' along with the fairly close defeat to Curzon 'B'. However, they then lost heavily against the top two teams and although they have made a new signing to bolster their squad they look almost certain to finish bottom.

Prediction 12th

Best Recent Performance – Madan Polekar marking his debut with a good win over Jordan Huang

Berkshire Inter-Town Report

by Duncan Groves

The annual competition between the four table tennis 'towns' in Berkshire, played for the '**Barbara Peisley trophy**', took place on Sunday 20 January. Instead of the recent format of three weekly events at Kingfisher, the event reverted to a single day's competition played on the ten tables at **Cippenham** Table Tennis Club. The timing of the event, being on the Sunday after a round of County matches the previous day, deprived Reading of some of its star players. Nonetheless, Reading's team organiser, Duncan Groves, felt that the assembled squad had enough strength to repeat recent years' successes.

Senior Division One

In the final week leading up to the event, Reading lost a couple of players to illness/injury and started a player light. New Kingfisher recruit, **Sachin Kapoor**, agreed to step up to the Division 1 Senior team, showing a great attitude to learning the game. His team mates, **Martin Adams** and **Andy Wang** were still favoured to win their matches, but it was a calculated gamble not to strengthen the team by promoting a player from the Division 2 side.

In their first match against **Bracknell**, Martin proved too strong for both Sagar Sawant and Danny Buckle, achieving 3 - 0 wins in each match. Andy repeated this feat, defeating Sagar and Phil Mead, continuing his impressive recent league form that has earned his reputation as the most awkward player to play this season. Sachin played well against Danny and came close to winning a game against Phil, before succumbing 14-16, 5-11, 5-11.

With Maidenhead league only represented in Division 3 Senior and Veterans, the Reading Division 1 Senior team had the task of defeating **Newbury** to win this mini-league and secure four points towards the trophy. Newbury put out a strong side, headed by Sam Ricks. With the valiant Sachin unable to trouble Antony Baker or Teifion Chamberlain, it was left for Martin and Andy to win both their matches. The viewing area at Cippenham became noticeably more crowded as Martin took to the table with Sam. Although Sam is quite rightly regarded as one of the County's top stars of the game, Martin showed his class with an incredible display of attacking table tennis, especially on the backhand, winning comfortably 11-5, 11-6, 11-2. Martin also defeated Antony Baker in four games, while Andy proved too strong for Teifion. That left the crucial final match up on table 1 between Andy and Sam.

Sam started the match on the front foot with a steady first game win but Andy came back strongly to win the second and third games. It looked as if it was all over in the fourth as Andy built a lead but Sam hit back to take it 12-10 and set up a deciding fifth game. With all eyes in the arena now on the match, Andy built a comfortable lead but Sam rallied to square the score at 8-8. Three incredible rallies later, and with two huge slices of fortune, Andy had secured the victory to set up Reading's campaign.

Division 1 Veterans

In the Division 1 Veterans category, Reading took on both Bracknell and Newbury with a player short, again trusting the talent of the two players to overcome their opposition and to leave the Division 2 and 3 teams stronger for their respective mini-leagues. In their first encounter, versus Bracknell, **Hari Gehlot** secured comfortable three game wins over Ian Cole and John Willcocks while **Mark Banks** edged competitive matches in four games against Peter Blyth and Ian Cole. That set up another big head to head match with the Newbury trio of Richard Fettes, Andy Barnes and Paul Rattue.

After surprisingly comfortable wins by Hari over Richard and Mark over Paul, Hari took on Andy Barnes to guarantee at least a draw. In a compelling contest, Hari slipped behind 2 - 1 before rallying to take the final two sets 11-9, 11-5. Mark then demolished Richard in three games to seal another 4 - 2 win for Reading and with it the Division 1 Vets mini-league and four more points towards the trophy.

Senior Division 2

Reading's Division 2 Senior team was led by the fast improving young player, **Joe Barraclough** and supported by the reliable **Julian Telford** and the gutsy **Matt Stone**. As with Division 1, the lack of any Maidenhead presence meant the task was to defeat both Bracknell and Newbury teams to maximise the points tally from the mini-league.

It soon became clear that the Reading team would be too strong for the Bracknell trio of Luca Bianchi, Pat Daniels and Mick Mitcham. A 6 - 0 result included five three game matches and just a single game loss for Julian against Pat. The Newbury match would be an altogether more challenging affair....

Joe started the match in style by defeating Kevin Brooker in straight games. However, Newbury hit back when Keith Langley overcame Matt in a thrilling five setter, taking the final two games 11-5 after losing the previous two to deuce. It was vital that Julian steadied the ship and he managed to squeeze past Phil Davenport 11-6, 10-12, 11-5, 8-11, 11-6. Joe then won an epic five game set with Keith to nudge Reading 3 - 1 ahead. Julian followed this up with a 3 - 1 victory over Kevin to secure the maximum number of points towards the Barbara Peisley trophy. To end a stunning match, Matt edged past Phil in another five set classic, taking the final game 11-9.

Veterans Division 2

The Reading league second string veterans of **Neil Hurford**, **Graham Mendick** and **Paul Savage** took to the table first against a Bracknell trio of David Holt, Gwynne Penny and Tim Challender. All three Reading players proved on top of their game shutting out their opponents in straight games for an impressive 6 - 0 victory.

Next was a potentially much trickier match versus Newbury league, represented by John Goodyer, Ian Langley and Nick Langley. First up was Neil Hurford to play

John and, despite a hiccup in the first game, Neil secured a comfortable 3 - 1 victory to start Reading's campaign off and running. The next match featured Berkshire County Vet, Ian, against Paul Savage. A topsy turvy match ended with Ian securing a 3 - 2 win, levelling the match at 1 - 1. Called up for his first ever Inter Town, Graham Mendick obviously relished the occasion and put on a great display to take a 3 - 0 win over Nick. Next on the table was Ian to face Neil. It was looking a tough encounter for the Reading man when Neil went 2 - 1 down in games but a close 11-9 fourth game was followed by a crushing 11-2 success to secure Reading another win towards the required four.

Graham continued his excellent form when defeating John in straight games to end the contest. Newbury secured a consolation final set win with Nick edging out Paul but a score line of 4 - 2 was enough for Reading league to secure another mini-league victory.

Senior Division 3

The Division 3 contests were much harder to predict as Maidenhead league had entered very decent sides in both Senior and Vets and that meant a much later finish for all concerned. In their first encounter the Reading Division 3 Senior team of **Roger Pritchard, Jingshun 'Jordan' Huang** and **Ludo Couillard** made relatively easy work of the Bracknell trio of Mark Salmon, Daniel Salmon and John Liddle, although Ludo did survive a five game battle with Daniel. The 6 - 0 victory started off their campaign effectively. It transpired, however, that Maidenhead and Newbury teams had also comfortably beaten Bracknell, so it became a three way battle for points.

In the crucial Newbury match up, Roger started with an impressive win over Terry White. However, Ian Wu proved too steady for Jordan and, despite a fantastic battle from Ludo, Mark Wheeler edged the third set in five games to take Newbury 2 - 1 ahead. In a fast-paced encounter, Jordan then proved too strong for Terry to level up 2 - 2. When the fifth match up ended in a 3 - 1 game victory for Mark over Roger, it looked like Reading's third string Seniors would suffer a defeat. However, Ludo's playing style was perfectly matched to that of Ian Wu and he took a surprise win in straight games to level the contest 3 - 3.

With Newbury having already drawn 3 - 3 against Maidenhead, it was clear that a 4 - 2 defeat of Maidenhead would be enough to secure the maximum points but another 3 - 3 draw would mean count-back. It proved to be another roller coaster match for Reading as each player, for the second time, managed a single singles win but could not follow up with a brace. Roger started by defeating David Hyder comfortably. Ludo was then beaten by Bas Mocharrarie before Jordan edged past Chris Collins. Roger's five game loss to Bas put Maidenhead back level then David secured a four game victory over Jordan to leave the match, and the points, in the hands of Ludo. As with the Newbury match, Ludo was up to the task, taking the victory by 12-10, 11-8, 11-8.

With three league teams having won one match and drawn two, it was down to count-back of games won and, to the team's delight, it was Reading who had secured sufficient games to nudge into top spot.

Veterans Division 3

In the final mini-league, Reading's third string Vets were comprised of **Duncan Groves, Barry Carter** and **Lee Wirkhani**. In their first encounter, Bracknell were only able to field two players and Reading made short work of completing a 6 - 0 victory.

Newbury league had already played a marathon match against Maidenhead, which ended in a 3 - 3 draw before taking on Reading. The tone of the contest was set in a pulsating contest between Newbury's Simon Barter and Duncan. Clearly struggling with Simon's 'back from the table' defensive style, Duncan slipped behind 9-11, 7-11. After winning a tight third game, Duncan was back in the contest and was able to turn it around and complete a fifth game 11-3 to put Reading 1 - 0 up in sets. This score soon became 3 - 0 as Barry defeated Jonathan Hopson and Lee overcame Andy Jeffery. In one of the most competitive matches of the tournament, Barry's efforts came up fractionally short in defeat to Simon by the narrowest of score lines: 7-11, 5-11, 11-8, 11-9, 10-12. Although Jonathan proved too strong for Lee, Duncan's straight game victory over Andy secured a 4 - 2 result in Reading's favour.

With most of the matches at the venue completed and fatigue taking over, Reading Division 3 Vets started their final match against Maidenhead. Played over two tables simultaneously, both Duncan and Lee suffered defeats, to Sue Hayes and David Tant respectively. It was clearly crucial that Reading could secure wins in the next two matches. Although down both 1 - 0 and 2 - 1, Duncan won a five game thriller against David and Barry chipped in with a four game win over Peter Chipperton. That left the final two singles of the day. Lee proved too steady for Peter with a straight games win and Barry played superbly against Sue, stopping her attacking game with some poised defending and counter-hitting. Barry's 3 - 0 games win over Sue secured the team's third win and the maximum available points.

A deserved victory for Reading!

The writer's thanks go out to all the players who represented Reading league so brilliantly on the day. Quite apart from winning all six of the mini-leagues, the commitment, team bonding and, above all else, the enjoyment of the event was evident to all. The organisation of the tournament and the facilities were excellent and thanks are due to Mick Mitcham and Sue Hayes for all their efforts. We look forward to another Cippenham based event in 2020.

Peisley Points

1	Reading	24
2	Newbury	18
3	Bracknell	11
4	Maidenhead	2

FULL RESULTS

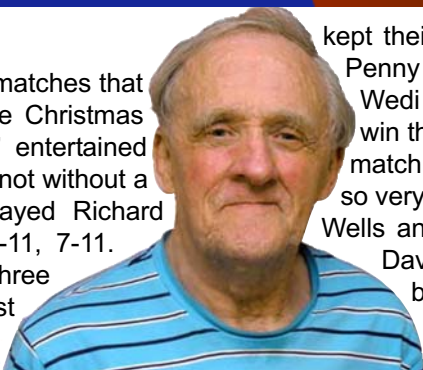


DIVISION THREE

by Derek Harrison

Hello everyone,

I will make a comment on the three matches that were played after the deadline for the Christmas edition. Firstly **Sonning Sports 'B'** entertained Tidmarsh 'C' and went down 2 – 8 but not without a fight. In set two Cris Reynolds played Richard Hudson and lost 11-2, 11-4, 9-11, 7-11, 7-11. What a fine line away from winning three straight. In set four Cris won the first game 11-2 then lost 12-14 only to lose the next two ends again it was close.



In set five Florin Dimofte gained the side their first point by beating Dave Sheppard 10-12, 11-8, 7-11, 13-11, 11-7. After the doubles it was 1 – 6 for Tidmarsh. In the eighth set Cris had a nice three straight win over Dave, beating him 11-6, 11-9, 11-6. In set nine Himanshu Pasbola went down with great determination to Spencer Harvey 5-11, 7-11, 11-9, 11-7, 7-11. In set ten Richard beat Florin to finish off the evening. Therefore Spencer and Richard both gained trebles. Sonning Sports 'B' then lost to Springfield 'B' 10 – 0 but put up a fight. In the opening set Florin only just lost to Steve Leggett 8-11, 11-8, 11-7, 8-11, 12-10 and this after being 5-10 up. The doubles was tight with Steve and Rob Wilkie just beating Sally James and Florin 11-8, 11-9, 9-11, 11-9 so that on another night could have gone the other way. For Springfield the hat trick men were Steve, Rob and Peter Gurney.

In another match **Tilehurst Meths 'B'** moved into second place by beating Tidmarsh 'D' 7 – 3. Nigel Rowland and Eric Van Looy both hit trebles. For Nigel they were all three straight which included one game winning 11-0! For Tidmarsh Dave Edwards, Dave Smith and Thereasa Watson all beat Patrick O'Sullivan.

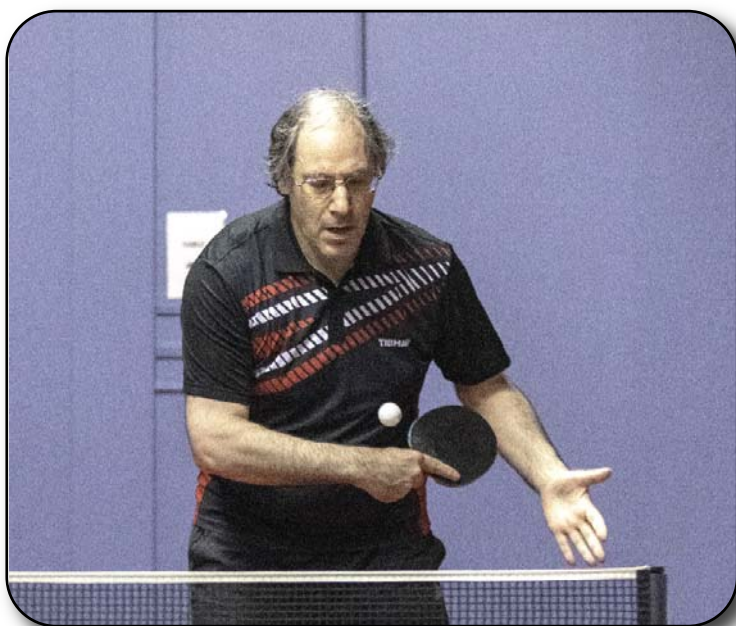
Kingfisher 'G' trailed Curzon 'C' 1 – 3 at one stage but

kept their unbeaten record by winning 7 – 3. Gwynne Penny was the star by gaining a very good treble. Nils Wedi hit a double besides teaming up with Gwynne to win the doubles set. I have to mention that in the first match of the season at Curzon Gwynne lost all three so very well done. At Tidmarsh 'D' hat tricks from David Wells and Joaquin Sabater gave them a 3 – 7 victory. David and Joaquin also teamed up to win the doubles. Hat Tricks from Gwynne and David helped them to a 9 – 1 win over Springfield 'C'. Joaquin won two besides teaming up with Jason to win the doubles. At Sonning Com & P 'E' hat tricks from David

Team	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
1 Springfield B	17	12	0	5	119	51	119
2 Tilehurst Meths B15	12	12	2	1	109	41	109
3 Kingfisher G	16	11	5	0	107	53	107
4 Tidmarsh C	16	10	4	2	100	60	100
5 Reading FC A	16	10	1	5	88	72	88
6 Tidmarsh D	16	6	4	6	77	83	77
7 OLOP D	16	6	2	8	72	88	72
8 Springfield C	17	4	4	9	67	103	67
9 SC&P E	16	3	3	10	62	98	62
10 Curzon Club C14	2	4	8	56	84	56	
11 Sonning Sp B	14	1	3	10	46	94	46
12 Kingfisher H	15	0	2	13	37	113	37

and Gwynne helped them to a 3 – 7 victory. Against O.L.O.P. 'D' they maintained their unbeaten record by winning 6 – 4 with Nils and David both gaining doubles. Joaquin won one besides teaming up with Nils to win the doubles.

Tilehurst Meths 'B' hammered bottom side Kingfisher 'H' 1 – 9 with Nigel and Patrick both hitting trebles. Martin Wetherell obtained a nice double. Against a very sporting Sonning Sports 'B' they won 10 – 0 but Nigel reports that their camaraderie was second to none and a great evening's it despite the scoreline and there were plenty of laughs during the evening. I have to say that is what the game is all about. Nigel also said that the scoreline did not reflect that there were some close sets. In the set between Martin and Sally James, Sally came back from 9-5 down in the first game to win 11-13 but in the end Martin won the next three. In the set between Eric and Florin, by great playing Florin won the first game 6-11 but then Eric stormed away to win the next three. In the set between Martin and Florin it went like this: 11-3, 3-11, 11-7, 5-11, 11-9. In that 5th game Florin was 4-5 up and seemed that he would go on to win but at 9-9 Martin got a lucky edge and then a smash from Florin went just off. In a vital match at Springfield 'B' they came away with a 4 – 6 win thanks to an Eric hitting a treble and Nigel winning two. The two of them combined to win the doubles. At Reading F C 'A' they came away with a 3 – 7 victory thanks to yet another maximum from Eric who also teamed up with Nigel who won two to take the doubles. Patrick had a close win over Wayne beating him 12-10, 12-14, 11-7, 10-12, 10-12.



SIMON BROOKES OF OLOP D



BEN CARLESS OF OLOP D

Springfield 'B' had won three in a row but then played an in-form Tidmarsh 'C' and lost 4 – 6. Rob did well to gain a double and also teamed up with Steve Leggett who won one to win the doubles. At Reading F C 'A' they came away with a 4 - 6 victory with Peter Gurney and Rob both winning two each. After missing three matches Seth Martin returned to the side and managed a single. Mind you it was a bit tight. He beat Wayne Alleyne 5-11, 14-12, 12-14, 11-5, 11-13. At home to a strong Tilehurst Meths 'B' they lost 4 – 6. Rob won two which included Nigel Rowland. Peter and Stephen Leggett each won one by beating Martin. At Curzon 'C' they hit them for ten as Rob, Seth and Steve all hit trebles. In fact apart from two sets that went to 4 games they were all three straight. They maintained their form by beating Tidmarsh 'D' 9 – 1 with Stephen and Rob both hitting trebles. In Rob's set against Terry Hardie he had to come from two games down. Peter who won two had a lot of net cords in his favour to beat Terry 14-12 in the opening game of the evening while in the last set he lost on an edge to Thereasa 9-11. Peter said he could not complain because he was riding his luck all evening when they were going his way.

Tidmarsh 'C' had a very good 4 – 6 win at Springfield 'B' with Ian Wu hitting a great treble. Simon Craig managed a double while Richard Hudson hit a single. They then won their fourth match in a row by beating O.L.O.P. 'D' 9 – 1. Simon and Spencer Harvey both obtained trebles although Simon's win over Graham Stark was a bit tight. It went as follows: 10-12, 11-13, 12-10, 11-9, 13-11. Ian hit two besides

teaming up with Simon to win the doubles. They then lost for the first time in ten matches when they went down 2 – 8 to Reading F C 'A'. Ian and Spencer won one each. At home to Curzon 'C' they just got home 6 – 4 thanks to a good all-round performance. Ian and Richard both obtained doubles with Spencer picking up a single.

Reading F C 'A' welcomed back Jazz Dhillon in to the team for his first match against Sonning Sports 'B' and he won all three and Richard Witt and Wayne Alleyne both won two each to help them win 2 – 8. At home to Springfield 'B' they went down 4 – 6 with Jazz and Anthony Alleyne winning two each. At highly rated Tidmarsh 'C' they came away with a great 2 – 8 victory. Anthony hit a very good maximum while Richard and Wayne both obtained doubles. At O.L.O.P 'D' Jazz came back into the side and promptly gained a three straight maximum. Wayne and Alleyne both won two each. Jazz and Wayne also won the doubles to give them a 2 – 8 win at home to a strong Tilehurst Meths 'B' they lost 3 – 7 with Anthony winning two and Jazz picking up a single..

Tidmarsh 'D' gained a draw at Sonning Com & P 'E' thanks mainly to a Terry Hardie maximum with Thereasa Watson winning two. At home to Kingfisher 'G' Terry, Thereasa and Dave Smith all beat Didier Garçon in a 3 – 7 defeat. At bottom of the table Kingfisher 'H' Thereasa was in great form by gaining a maximum and with Dave Edwards winning two and Dave S obtaining a single this helped to a 3 – 7 win. Next they beat Sonning Sports 'B' 6 – 4. Terry was the star by winning all three in straight sets by beating Florin 11-6, 11-9, 11-8 Sally 11-6, 11-7, 13-11 and Cris 11-2, 11-8, 11-5. The two Dave's both gained singles and Terry and Dave E won the doubles. At Springfield 'B' Thereasa won the only set when she beat Peter Gurney in a 9 – 1 defeat.

O.L.O.P. 'D' shared the spoils with Springfield 'C' with Graham Stark and Simon Brookes both winning two each. Paul Treadgold gained a single. At Tidmarsh 'C' they only had a Ben Carless win over Ian Wu in their 9 – 1 defeat. At Sonning Com & P 'E' they went down 7 – 3. Paul and Mark Carless won one each. Simon and Mark also had a fine doubles win. At home to Reading F C 'A' Graham did well by winning two. In the opening set of the evening he beat Wayne Alleyne 11-7, 11-9, 4-11, 11-4 then in the final set he beat Anthony Alleyne 11-4, 13-11, 9-11, 11-8. The doubles was rather tight with the Football club winning 4-11, 11-8, 12-10, 6-11, 11-13. At Kingfisher 'G' Ben had a great night when he beat Joaquin 6-11, 8-11, 6-11 Nils 11-4, 11-1, 10-12, 9-11, 6-11 and David 8-11, 9-11, 7-11, so very well done Ben. Graham won the other set by beating Joaquin.

Curzon 'C' went down 7 – 3 at Kingfisher 'G' with Derek Harrison, Jim Brent and Geoff Johnson all obtaining singles. At Sonning Sports 'B' we crashed to a 7 – 3 defeat with Geoff winning two and Jim one. At home to Springfield 'B' an injury hit team lost 0 – 10. At Tidmarsh 'C' despite an injury Geoff hit a fine hat trick by beating Ian 11-9, 10-12, 5-11, 8-11 then Spencer 8-11, 4-11, 3-11 and Richard 13-11, 9-11, 8-11, 11-6, 3-11. I managed a rare win by beating Spencer 3-11, 6-11, 11-3, 13-11, this after being 7-10 up 10-12 this after being 5-2 down.

Springfield 'C' gained five welcome points at O.L.O.P 'D'. Jason King managed a double and Adrian Wegrzynowski



PAUL TREADGOLD OF OLOP 'D'

and Robert Attack both won one each. Jason and Adrian also won the doubles. At home to Sonning Com & P 'E' they won 7 – 3. Adrian was on top form by winning all three. Jason hit two besides teaming up with Adrian to win the doubles. Rob helped out by winning one. At Kingfisher 'G' they went down 9 – 1 with Jason beating Joaquin. At home to bottom side Kingfisher 'H' they won 8 – 2 with Jason obtaining his second maximum of the season. Rob and Adrian won two each. Jason and Rob also won the doubles. They then visited Springfield 'C' and came away with a draw. Adrian won two besides teaming up with Jason who obtained a single to win a very close doubles against Florin and Chris 9-11, 11-5, 11-6, 11-13, then 3-11. Rob won the other set.

Sonning Sports 'B' lost 2 – 8 to a strong Reading F C 'A' with Florin Dimofte winning the two. Against Tilehurst Meths 'B' they went down 10 – 0. I will not make any further com-

and Adrian had an extraordinary serve which landed on Sally's side and then spun back to Adrian's side which made it in possible to deal with so that gave Adrian the edge to win 13-15, 2-11, 4-11. I wonder a thin line. In the last set Florin picked up the wrong bat so once he had started could not change it but it came right when he won 11-4, 9-11,8-11, 11-7, 11-6 against Rob thus sealing the draw. In the match between Sally and Rob it was a bit tight with Sally winning 11-9, 12-10, 11-9. I have to say what is it about Sonning Sports? Cris always gives me great match reports as did Bob Woodmansee when he was in my division so a big thank you.

Sonning Com & P 'E' shared the spoils with Tidmarsh 'D'. Jamie Legg had a good night by obtaining a double while Derek Wavell and Melvyn Lovegrove both won one each. Jamie and Melvyn had a nice doubles win. At Springfield 'C' they lost 7 – 3. Melvin managed a double and Jamie obtained a single. At home to O.L.O.P 'D' young Jamie had a great night by winning all three. He beat Paul Treadgold 7-11, 11-6, 3-11, 11-7, 11-6 Simon Brookes 11-9, 8-11, 9-11, 11-4, 11-5 Mark Carless 11-5, 12-14, 11-4, 5-11, 11-6. You certainly got your money's worth, Jamie, with all 5 game sets. Both Melvyn and Oliver Sayer won two each. At home to Kingfisher 'G' they gained three valuable points when Derek, Oliver and new player Mikey Legg all beat Didier Garçon. At Kingfisher 'H' Derek gained his first maximum of the season and with Jamie and Melvyn both picking up singles the match ended all square.

Kingfisher 'H' went down 1 – 9 to Tilehurst Meths 'B'. Maksym Schipka saved the white wash by beating Martin Wetherell in set ten 13-11, 11-5,11-5. At home to Tidmarsh 'D' Maksym won two and Ken Robb won one in a 3 – 7 defeat. At Springfield 'C' they lost 8 – 2 with Peter Bennett and Ken winning the sets. At home to Sonning Com & P 'E' they gained there second point of the season with Peter and Ken both winning two and also the two of them winning the doubles.

I now list the leaders of the P O M:

Eric Van Looy 7, Geoff Johnson 6, Ian Wu 6, Anthony Alleyne 6, Rob Wilkie 5, Adrian Wegrzynowski 4, Terry Hardie 4, David Wells 4, Steve Leggett 4. I looked in vain for my name and it was nowhere to be seen!!

Finally there are two re-arranged matches that will be played after the deadline for this report, Tilehurst Meths 'B' vs Tidmarsh 'C' and Sonning Sports 'B' vs Tilehurst Meths 'B' so I will not be able to include them in my report but I believe at least one of the results will be included in the newsletter.

STOP PRESS

Congratulations to Gwynne Penny and Eric Van Looy on their success at the Reading Closed. For Gwynne on winning the Ladies singles and teaming up with Eric to win the mixed doubles and winning the Ladies Doubles, and for Eric on winning the division three singles and again teaming up with Gwynne on winning the mixed doubles.

Cheers,

Derek

LEADING AVERAGES				
Player	Team	P	W	%
Eric Van Looy	Tilehurst Meths B	33	32	96.97%
Nigel Rowland	Tilehurst Meths B	36	32	88.89%
David Wells	Kingfisher G	36	31	86.11%
Rob Wilkie	Springfield B	39	33	84.62%
Nils Wedi	Kingfisher G	30	24	80.00%
Simon Craig	Tidmarsh C	24	18	75.00%
Tony Alleyne	Reading FC A	42	31	73.81%
Ian Wu	Tidmarsh C	33	24	72.73%
Geoff Johnson	Curzon Club C	35	25	71.43%
Stephen Leggett	Springfield B	45	32	71.11%
Gwynne Penny	Kingfisher G	33	23	69.70%
Joaquin Sabater	Kingfisher G	20	13	65.00%
Benedict Carless	OLOP D	33	21	63.64%
Richard Hudson	Tidmarsh C	30	19	63.33%
Seth Martin	Springfield B	24	15	62.50%
Terry Hardie	Tidmarsh D	36	22	61.11%

ment but have a look at my Tilehurst report. At last a win when they beat Curzon 'C' 7 – 3. Sally James, Cris Reynolds and Florin all won two each. For Sally she had a fine in over Geoff Johnson beating him 2-11, 11-7, 11-1, 12-10. She did it by hitting plenty of hard winners which were very accurate which put Geoff of guard. Also Florin and Cris combined to give the team their first doubles of the season. At Tidmarsh 'D' they lost 6 – 4 with Florin winning two and Cris and Sally each winning one. I have since received a report from Cris so here goes. In the set between Sally and Dave E it turned out to be the contest of the evening. Sally was two games down 11-6, 11-8 then Sally played a great defence as Dave used his whipped backhand smashes which Sally defended heroically so she became more and more assertive to win the next two games 9-11, 9-11 and then won the final game 7-11 after being 3-10 up. In their next match Florin was the star by hitting all three against Springfield 'C' and with Sally and Chris picking up singles it ended all square. Since Cris has sent this report. He was not expected to play so turned up in a casual shirt but it did him no harm because in set nine he played Jason and lost the first game 9-11 and was 1-5 down in the second only to come back to win 11-6 then 11-5, 11-8. It would seem there was plenty of emotion from both players. Earlier Sally played Adrian and was 11-10 up in the first game

The Individual Handicap by Derek Wavell



ABHAY GORE

Julian Telford and his son Jamie also brought credit to their family name

Wendy Porter, who was running the competition, had separated the competitors into groups of 5, with Groups A, D, E and H starting at 9 a.m and Groups B, C, F and G starting at 12.20. Before anyone was knocked out,

they had to play everyone else

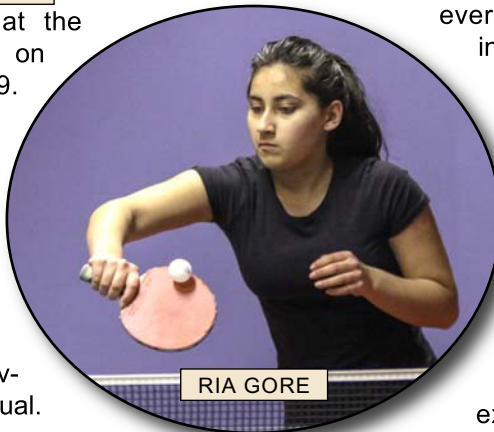
in their group, which meant it was worth everyone's while to come.



JEREMY WILLIS

The tournament was held at the Kingfisher table tennis club on Sunday 6th January 2019.

The entry had to be limited to 40 places, from the many who wanted to attend - and 37 competitors took part on the day. The Individual Handicap is the one competition above all where everyone can do their utmost with a real chance of winning - because a handicapping system moves heaven and earth to make everyone equal.



RIA GORE

For once there were quite a few upper division players - like Julian Telford, Jeremy Willis, Tim Raby, Zoltan Kelemen, John Little, Paul Treadgold and others. But as the day wore on it became clear that younger talents were holding sway - and not the necessarily the ones

you might expect, like Johnson Xu or

Ralph Philips.

So

there was a unique mix of ages and genders competing together - players from every Division from One down to the Youth League.

Virtually all the

photos in this edition of the Newsletter - in all five divisional reports - were taken at the Individual Handicap, so you can see for yourself what a wide range of players it included.

Abhay Gore - a successful Division Two senior player - accompanied his son Om and daughter Ria Abhay, and all of them took scalps along the way.

Five of the eight groups were won by juniors - Lewis Oke from group A, Mo Cook (D), Jamie Li-Telford (E), Tommy Woodward (F) and Rajat Sawant (G). So only three senior players were left in at that stage - Steve Christelow (C), Steve Wood (B) and Jeremy Willis (H).

Once the group stage was over, we were in the quarter finals, with Rajat Sawant - a junior - playing a senior, Steve



JAMIE LI-TELFORD



JULIAN TELFORD



JOHN LITTLE



BEN CARLESS



MO COOK

Wood. For once the handicaps were very similar - with 6 for Rajat and 7 for Steve; so Steve actually started each game with a score of one love. Both players were warmed up now, and the contest was a close one - however, young Rajat managed to pull ahead, and won in two straight games 21-18, 21-16.

The next contest was another battle of the generations - and handicaps too. Young Lewis Oke on plus 12 was up against seasoned Division One veteran Jeremy Willis on minus 10! Which meant that Lewis started with a score of 17 love. Jeremy did not let this daunt him - but the task was just too much, and he went down 21-3, 21-6.

Back to similar handicaps with Steve Christelow against Tommy Woodward. Young Tommy started with a three points advantage - but that was not nearly enough against this experienced player, and Steve ended up the winner 21-10, 21-9.



RAJAT SAWANT

At this stage of the quarter finals the talents of young Mo Cook suddenly became even more apparent. Mo had a handicap of only 2 - and he was playing Jamie Li-Telford, another junior but one who had experience of the senior league, and a nine points start too. By stunning play, Mo managed to catch up, get his nose in front, and win 21-14, 21-10.

In the semi finals, Rajat beat Lewis and Mo Cook beat Steve Christelow.

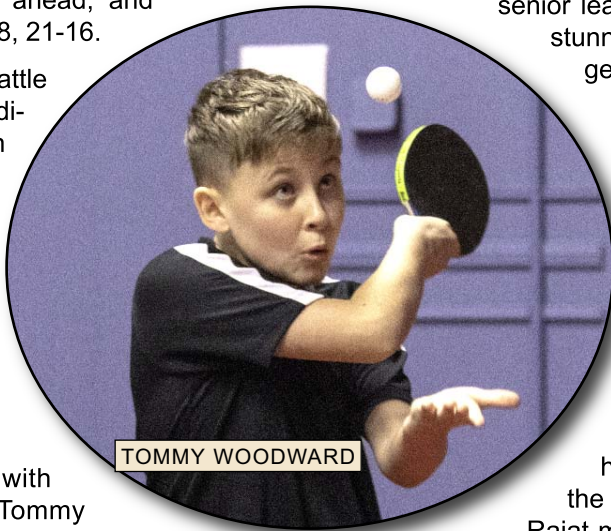
So that left a final in which Rajat Sawant was confronting Mo Cook, with a four point advantage to Rajat.

Mo had been really dominant all day, and his play now rose to new heights. In a thrilling contest he won the first game 21-16. And then, try as Rajat might, he couldn't subdue his foe, and

Mo Cook

ended up a worthy champion, with a score of 21-16 in the second game .

Once again Wendy Porter must be thanked for providing Reading with such an excellently-run and enjoyable tournament.



TOMMY WOODWARD



STEVE WOOD



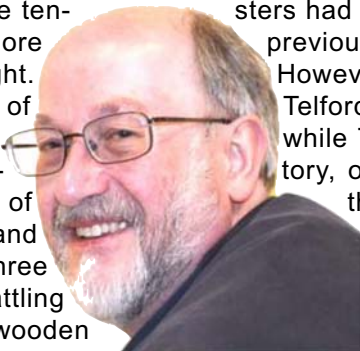
STEVE CHRISTELOW



DIVISION FOUR

by Martin Wetherell

I hope those of you that are not injured are still enjoying the cut and thrust of League table tennis, especially as it all gets a bit more tense, with the end of the season in sight. Although I find myself looking at some of the scorecards in amazement (usually due to the result, rather than the handwriting !) my belief is that Our Lady of Peace 'E', Tilehurst Methodists 'C' and Reading FC 'B' will reflect the top three spots and that Springfield 'D' will be battling with Sonning Sports 'C' to avoid the wooden spoon, since Kingfisher 'I' have made some astute signings which should enable them to escape the dogfight.



This was the first time that the Kennet Valley youngsters had played together, at an away venue, their two previous home appearances both ending in defeat. However, the team were triumphant, with Jamie Li-Telford and Lewis Oke both recording doubles, while Toby Barter's 8-11 12-10 8-11 11-9 11-9 victory, over Colin Phillips, was a crucial element in the 4 - 6 win, as was Jamie & Toby's Doubles win, when they beat Tony Hayden & John Evans 11-3 7-11 11-9 11-9. In fact, 19 of the 41 games that were played were won by the minimum two points, with 10 going to deuce, Toby's contest with John Evans highlighting the fine line between victory and defeat, as he lost by the narrowest of margins 10-12 11-9 9-11 9-11. The fol-

In the Singles Averages, Our Lady of Peace's Ralph Philips is the only undefeated player, discounting Kingfisher's Roger Prew as he has only played in one match, followed by Oliver Bonser on 90.91%, Chris Bunn on 89.66%, Roy Hull on 87.80% and Derek Anderson on 86.96%, with Anthony Reeve, Joe Bull and Pete Sinclair all batting above 80%. In the Doubles Averages, Tilehurst Methodists' Roy Hull & Steve Wood are still top, but Our Lady of Peace's Jan Polnik & Ralph Philips are treading on their coattails, while in the Player of the Month table, Reading FC's Joe Bull and Tilehurst Methodists' Roy Hull are tied at the top, with 9 PoMs, while Sonning Common & Peppard's Anthony Reeve is just behind, with 8 PoMs.

At the beginning of 2019, Kennet Valley Free Church 'B' were sitting in 9th place, with 42 points. After a further 4 matches, with three wins and one draw, they have amassed a further 25 points and are now 8th equal! They started January with an away visit to Milestone 'C', who were three places above them.

DIV 4 LEADING AVERAGES				
Player	Team	P	W	%
Ralph Philips	OLOP E	21	21	100.00%
Oliver Bonser	Milestone C	22	20	90.91%
Christopher Bunn	OLOP E	29	26	89.66%
Roy Hull	Tilehurst Meths C	41	36	87.80%
Derek Anderson	Reading FC B	23	20	86.96%
Anthony Reeve	SC&P G	36	30	83.33%
Joe Bull	Reading FC	41	34	82.93%
Peter Sinclair	Tidmarsh E	21	17	80.95%
Steve Wood	Tilehurst Meths C	29	23	79.31%
Mike Casserley	SC&P F	48	34	70.83%
Julian James	SC&P F	30	21	70.00%
Carl Edlind	Milestone C	35	24	68.57%

lowing week they faced leaders Tilehurst Methodists 'C' with a slightly changed team, Steve Christelow stepping up as a replacement for Jamie, and again won 6 - 4, inflicting on Methodists their second successive defeat, Lewis, Toby and Steve each winning twice, this being Toby's first double, with all three beating both Andy Stone and Rob James, but losing to Roy Hull.

With their match against Reading FC 'B' being postponed, Kennet Valley had to wait a fortnight before welcoming visitors Sonning Sports 'C', who could only field two players - John Scott and Jude O'Halloran - although they were Sonning Sports' highest ranked players. By the end of the evening, Kennet Valley had managed to draw 5 - 5, thanks to the three forfeited sets, since Steve had defeated both John and Jude, just beating Jude in three close games 12-10 11-8 11-9. Although Toby and Lewis didn't win, Toby took John to 5 games, eventually losing 11-7 11-8 3-11 8-11 5-11, and, not to be outdone, Lewis pushed Jude all the way, in the final set, before losing 11-6 9-11 15-13 6-11 6-11. To end this round of matches, Kennet Valley travelled to Springfield 'D' with Jamie Li-Telford replacing Lewis in the line-up. This was undoubtedly Jamie's best



RALPH PHILIPS

match, winning his first treble and his first PoM, but also highlighting his determination, by not only fighting back to beat Chris 'Spike' Speight 11-6 0-11 6-11 11-4 11-9, after a disastrous 2nd game, but achieving a similar feat against Tom Berryman, to eventually win 14-12 5-11 5-11 11-8 11-9 and record a maximum. His colleagues, Toby and Steve, didn't play badly, either, each winning twice, Toby also winning the Doubles with Jamie, to equal their best away win of 2 - 8.

Steve Christelow remains Kennet Valley's star, with 67.74%, having played in a few more matches than his teammates. Russ Moores has not played for two months, due to back problems, so is now behind Jamie Li-Telford and Lewis Oke in the averages. On the Doubles front, Toby has played in all four matches, losing twice with previous partner Lewis Oke, but winning twice in a new combination with Jamie, which currently makes them Kennet Valley's only undefeated Doubles pair.

As we entered 2019, **Kingfisher 'I'** were languishing in 11th place, with just the one win and 8 points adrift of 10th place. Having played a further five matches, Kingfisher have recorded a further three wins and have climbed to 10th. This upturn in fortune can be attributed to a strengthened squad, with the signing in November of Sandeep Burande, who this calendar year has shown some fine form, and recent addition Roger Prew. The latest round of matches started with an away defeat to Reading FC 'B', Kingfisher losing 3 - 7, their three wins courtesy of Sandeep's first double and a single from Derek Crombie, who beat Tony Edwards over a tense 5 games 8-11 11-8 14-12 10-12 11-8, Gill Bennett having no luck in the singles, losing to Tony 11-9 11-8 9-11 7-11 8-11, or the Doubles, where she paired up with Sandeep, which was also lost over 5 games. Sandeep was not quite the busiest person on the night, playing 12 singles games and 5 Doubles games, but 8 of his 12 singles were only won by the minimum two points and he was only denied his maximum by PoM Joe Bull.



STEVE CHRISTELOW

A further loss followed, albeit by the narrowest of margins, when Sonning Sports 'C' left as 6 - 4 winners, despite doubles from both Gill and Meriel Low, reversing the scoreline from their earlier encounter. Gill had a busy evening, playing 15 singles games and 4 doubles games, beating Michael Byrne 4-11 7-11 11-2 11-8 11-8 and Mo Cole 11-6 11-9 10-12 4-11 11-8, but just losing out to Jude O'Halloran in their final set, Jude having also quashed Meriel's dreams of glory earlier, when he won 9-11 13-11 8-11 11-7 11-4. Derek Crombie was the third player that night, taking Michael Byrne to four games and losing in three to Mo Cole, 4-11 10-12 11-13. However, in their next match, away to Springfield 'D', Sandeep scored his first treble, a straight sets win, earning himself the PoM, Meriel scored her third consecutive double, missing out on a chance of a maximum when she lost her first set to Chris Speight, 9-11 10-12 8-11, and Gill recorded a single, missing out on a double when she lost to Tom Berryman 10-12 7-11 8-11, while Sandeep and Meriel partnered up to take the Doubles, to record a 7 - 3 match win.



LEWIS OKE

Front runners Our Lady of Peace 'E' were the next team to visit and, after 39 games, Kingfisher scraped home as 6 - 4 winners, with similar results to the previous week, Sandeep recording a treble, Meriel a double, which included her 16-14 11-9 11-8 victory over Jan Polnik, and Gill a single, beating Mariusz Paluszkiwicz but losing to both Andrew Adair and Jan, across four close games. However, Sandeep & Meriel couldn't replicate their Doubles victory, from the previous week, losing to the unbeaten pairing of Andrew Adair & Jan Polnik. Their final match was away to Sonning Common & Peppard 'F', where Kingfisher recorded their best win so far, a 9 - 1 victory, with Roger Prew

finally making his debut and winning all three, beating Mike Casserley 6-11 9-11 12-10 11-7 11-9 in the final set, but losing out on the PoM to Meriel, who only dropped one game all evening, Sandeep losing to Mike but recovering from that loss to partner Meriel to a Doubles win.

Miguel Caballero has not played since early November and his presence was sorely missed, but he still leads the official averages, with 75%, since Roger's 100% is based on the one match. Close behind is Sandeep, on 67%, and then Meriel, on 63%. On the Doubles front, the new partnership of Sandeep Burande and Meriel Low have now played together three times, winning twice, thus moving them to the top of Kingfisher's Doubles table.

Milestone 'C' have played seven more matches since the last Newsletter was published, winning three and drawing one, and have consequently climbed from 6th to 4th place. They started with a 4 - 6 defeat, at home to Kennet Valley Free Church 'B', despite John

Evans recording his fifth maximum, with Tony Hayden only able to beat Toby Barter. Colin Phillips fared less well, playing 14 games during the evening, 7 of them only being won by the minimum two points allowed, his 11-8 10-12 11-8 9-11 9-11



JOHN EVANS

defeat by Toby being a case in point. This was followed by another 4 - 6 result, this time in favour of Milestone, when they defeated Springfield 'E', Ollie Bonser taking the plaudits with his match winning treble. Colin was again denied a win, although he took Colin Jones to five games and only lost 10-12 4-11 10-12 to Marcello Caramma. However, John won two singles, including a five game win over Marcello, and helped Ollie win a crucial Doubles. The next week, Milestone beat Tidmarsh 'E' 8 - 2, Carl Edlind and Ollie Bonser both racking up their fifth trebles of this campaign, with Carl just pipping Ollie to the PoM award. Carl & Ollie also won the Doubles, and Tony Hayden got the better of Steve Andrews, in his final set, to win 11-4 11-9 12-10, and record a single. This victory meant that Milestone had not only done the double over Tidmarsh, but it was also the first time that Milestone had won back to back

Team	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
1 OLOP E	15	11	2	2	104	46	104
2 Tilehurst Meths C	15	11	2	2	101	49	101
3 Reading FC B	15	10	1	4	95	55	95
4 Milestone C	17	8	2	7	92	78	92
5 Tidmarsh E	15	8	1	6	89	61	89
6 SC&P G	16	9	2	5	85	75	85
7 SC&P F	17	7	1	9	85	85	85
8 Springfield E	17	5	1	11	70	100	70
9 Kennet Valley FC B	15	7	1	7	67	83	67
10 Kingfisher I	16	4	0	12	57	103	57
11 Sonning Sports C	15	3	2	10	54	96	54
12 Springfield D	17	4	1	12	51	119	51

matches.

They almost made it three on the trot, when they welcomed table toppers Tilehurst Methodists 'C', but had to settle for a 5 - 5 draw, after Methodists' Roy Hull and David Bates won the Doubles and then the last two sets, Milestone's points courtesy of doubles from Tony Hayden and Ollie Bonser, who both beat Andy Stone and David Bates, as well as a single from Carl Edlind. However, there was no time to reflect on what might have been, since their postponed match with Sonning Common & Peppard 'G' had been rescheduled for the following day. Although Carl and John both won twice, Tony Hayden had no joy, coming close in his 9-11 8-11 12-14 loss to Arran Reeve, the end result being that the match was lost 4 - 6. Six days later, Milestone travelled to Reading FC 'B', where despite Ollie, Carl and Colin Phillips' best efforts, they lost 7 - 3, Ollie being denied his maximum after losing 11-3 11-9 9-11 8-11 10-12 to Joe Bull and Carl being denied a double when he lost 11-7 9-11 12-14 12-10 6-11 to Keith Greene. They were due to play Sonning Common & Peppard 'F' in March, but circumstances required the match be played earlier, requiring another away day. On paper Milestone fielded their strongest team, but were probably not too displeased that Gerry Bacon had to concede his sets against Ollie and John, due to injury, a result which guaranteed Milestone a 4 - 6 win, following Ollie's earlier double, Carl's 11-4 12-10 10-12 11-9 win over Gerry, and the Doubles.

The squad remains unchanged, with Carl Edlind having played in the most matches, closely followed by John Evans and Tony Hayden, with Ollie Bonser and Colin Phillips having played in a couple less matches. Ollie is their star player with 91%, Carl is on 69% and John is just behind, on 66%. However, John (5) has won more PoMs than either Ollie (4) or Carl (2). On the Doubles front, Ollie has played in four matches, with three wins and one defeat, the defeat bringing to an end his unbeaten status with Carl. However, as if he knew this was going to happen, Ollie has also started a new partnership with John, and they now lead the Milestone leaderboard with one win from one match,

although Ollie & Carl have a respectable 80%, having lost once in five matches.

Since the last Newsletter, **Our Lady of Peace 'E'** have played a further five matches and have taken advantage of a downturn in the fortunes of Tilehurst Methodists 'C', to take over at the top of the Division. Their first match in January was a 10 - 0 victory, away to Springfield 'D', which was their first one this season. Chris Bunn won in straight sets, Ralph Philips lost a game for the first time since November, while Andrew Adair needed five games to beat Chris Speight and four games to beat Johnny Worrall. The following week Tidmarsh 'E' were the visitors, Chris winning the final set to record his maximum and confirm the win, by the narrowest 6 - 4 margin. However, the win would not have been possible without the assistance of Andrew's double and Jan Polnik's crucial single, Jan beating John Harland 11-9 11-8 13-11 to stop Tidmarsh taking an early 3 - 1 lead. Another home match, this time welcoming Sonning Common & Peppard 'F', with Alona Slobodskoy making her first appearance in over two months. Ralph Philips recorded a further maximum, winning in straight sets, with Andrew Adair and Alona each picking up one singles win each, Ralph and Jan Polnik recording their fourth Doubles win, to cement the 6 - 4 win. Although she only won one, Alona showed great determination to battle through three tough five game sets, narrowly losing her opener to Mike Casserley 10-12 11-7 12-10 10-12 16-18, then beating Gerry Bacon 11-7 5-11 12-10 6-11 11-1, before losing to Julian James 4-11 12-10 11-9 5-11 12-14.

The following week they travelled to Kingfisher 'I', where they lost 6 - 4, with Andrew recording two wins but missing out on a maximum after he was beaten by Sandeep Burande 9-11 10-12 11-7 8-11, Jan recording one win, a fine 8-11 11-9 11-7 12-10 victory over Gill Bennett, while Mariusz Paluszkiwicz, in his first outing since October, came close but just fell short, as demonstrated by his five game contest with Meriel Low and his 5-11 8-11 11-13 loss to Sandeep, who was unbeatable on the night. Their fifth match was at home, to Sonning Common & Peppard 'G', with the points being made safe when OLOP won the last four sets to record a 7 - 3 victory, Ralph Philips scoring another maximum, Jan Polnik winning twice, while Andrew Adair chipped in with one win. However, for the first time, Ralph required a fifth game to defeat Ian Davenport, the final scoreline being 10-12 14-12 14-12 9-11 11-7.

Despite the new signings made by other Clubs, before the cut-off, this squad is probably still the strongest. Ralph Philips is still undefeated, after seven outings, but is ably supported by his teammates, especially Chris Bunn who is on 90%. On the Doubles front, Chris Bunn & Jan Polnik lost for the second time, at home to Steve Andrews & John Harland of Tidmarsh 'E', but since this is only the second time that the team has lost a Doubles, OLOP still have five other undefeated partnerships, with Ralph Philips & Jan currently second on the leaderboard, having played together five

times.

Reading FC 'B', aka The Biscuitmen, remain in 3rd place, hot on the heels of OLOP and Tilehurst Methodists, with all three title contenders losing matches in the past six weeks. January started with a good win over visitors Kingfisher 'I', Joe Bull continuing his fine run with another treble, Harry Edwards contributing a double, just losing out to Sandeep Burande 10-12 7-11 11-9 10-12, while, following his Doubles win with Joe, Tony Edwards fought back to beat Gill Bennett 9-11 8-11 11-9 11-7 11-8, all of which earned a 7 - 3 victory. The same team then travelled to Sonning Common & Peppard 'G', where they suffered a slight reversal in fortunes, losing 6 - 4, despite Joe recording



ANDREW ADAIR

a further maximum, with Joe & Tony again winning the Doubles 3 - 2, defeating Anthony Reeve & Ian Davenport 13-11 3-11 8-11 11-4 11-2. With their next match, at home against Kennet Valley 'B', being postponed, The Biscuitmen were on their travels the following week, stopping off at Springfield 'E'. For this match, Tony stepped down and his place was taken by Keith Greene, who was making his first appearance of the season. With Joe again winning all three, as well as Harry and Keith both recording doubles, victory was assured and with Joe & Keith winning the Doubles, the final result was 8 - 2. The same team then played in the next two matches, firstly despatching Milestone 'C' 7 - 3, the scoreline reflecting that Harry was only able to contribute the one win, after losing to Ollie Bonser 4-11 9-11 9-11, and then losing to Tidmarsh 'E' 2 - 8, Joe and Keith being their sole winners, both beating Mike Bundy but losing out to an effervescent Pete Sinclair and Steve Andrews.

Derek Anderson has not played this calendar year, but still tops Reading FC's averages, with 86%, although Joe Bull on 83%, having played in almost

twice as many matches, is close behind, with Harry Edwards and Keith Greene both averaging 50%, or more. On the Doubles front, Joe Bull & Tony Edwards played together twice more, winning both times, to improve their average, with all three wins by the same 3 - 2 margin. Keith Greene has played in all three of his matches, winning twice with Joe, making this pairing their current table toppers, and losing once with Harry Edwards.

Having won only two of their last six matches, **Sonning Common & Peppard 'F'** have dropped from 5th to 7th place. January started with an away trip to Sonning Sports 'C', where they suffered an 8 - 2 defeat, Gerry Bacon winning both points, as Steve Knott and Derek Maltby were both unable to register a win, despite their best efforts, an example being their respective defeats by Michael Byrne, Steve losing 10-12 11-5 11-8 9-11 9-11 and Derek losing 14-12 11-3 8-11 6-11 14-16. Gerry was joined by Mike Casserley and Julian James, for their next foray, a home match against Springfield 'D', when they recorded the team's best win, a 10 - 0 victory, with Mike partnering Derek Maltby in the Doubles win. However, this contest was not as easy as the scoreline might suggest, with Mike having to overcome Chris 'Spike' Speight to win 10-12 11-9 11-9 8-11 11-7. The same team then faced off against Our Lady of Peace 'E', Mike unable to secure the draw after losing to the undefeated Ralph Philips 11-13 5-11 10-12 in the final set, the team therefore losing 4 - 6, with Gerry and Julian both only able to win one set each, to add to Mike's double, which included a close 12-10 7-11 10-12 12-10 18-16 win over Alona Slobodskoy.

The following week, a similar scoreline albeit a different result as Mike Casserley won his final set, defeating Mike Bundy 11-13 11-8 11-8 9-11 11-4, to help his team to a 6 - 4 win over Tidmarsh 'E', Mike ending the evening with a double after losing his opening set to Roger Stevens, Julian leading the way with a maximum, starting with his 10-12 9-11 11-9 11-8 11-8 comeback against Mike Bundy, while Derek Maltby & Mike Casserley won the Doubles. Back to earth with a bang, following the visit of Kingfisher 'I', who inflicted a repeat of the team's worst defeat, a 1 - 9 loss, Mike Casserley avoiding the whitewash by beating Sandeep Burande, with Steve Knott and Derek unable to add any wins. Their final match was another home defeat, this time a 4 - 6 loss to Milestone 'C', the team having to concede two sets after Gerry Bacon injured his wrist, in the very first set, eventually losing to Carl Edlind 4-11 10-12 12-10 9-11 and having to sit out the rest of the match, Julian James and Mike both ending the evening with two wins apiece, Julian's 9-11 11-7 10-12 11-9 12-10 win, against John Evans, of especial note.

The squad remains the same as at the start of the season, with Mike Casserley just in front as their number one, having played every match except one, with an average of 71% and having accrued 4 PoMs. Julian James is close behind, on 70% and 2 PoMs, followed

by Gerry Bacon, with 61% and 1 PoM. Steve Knott hasn't been able to add to his tally in 2019 and Derek Maltby is still looking for his first singles win, although he has played in almost all the team's Doubles wins, with two more wins being recorded from the latest six matches.

Sonning Common & Peppard 'G' have recently signed two new players, Jim Warren in December, followed by Ian Davenport in January, and they both debuted in their opening January fixture, away at table topping Tilehurst Methodists 'C', where they were joined by Anthony Reeve. Anthony turned in another polished performance to record another maximum, Ian assisted with a double and a 6 - 4 result was achieved thanks to Ian & Anthony beating the previously unde-



ROB JAMES

feated Roy Hull & Rob James, in a thrilling encounter, winning 8-11 11-7 7-11 11-8 12-10. The following week, 3rd placed Reading FC 'B' suffered a similar fate, the Commoners winning 6 - 4, with Anthony, Ian and Marko Madzar each winning two sets, Reading FC's Harry Edwards on fire and beating everyone in straight sets. A road trip to Sonning Sports 'C' was next up, where Anthony's treble, doubles from both Jim Warren and Marko, along with the Doubles, Anthony & Jim pairing up for the first time, meant that this 8 - 2 victory was the season's best. At least, so far! This match saw Jim record his first wins, beating Phil Peat and Jude O'Halloran in straight sets, the latter by a combative 11-9 15-13 11-8 scoreline.

This third win in succession also set a new standard, but this was quickly consigned to history as the Commoners were also victorious in their next two matches, both played in the same week. The first of these matches was a 7 - 3 home win against Springfield 'D', Anthony routing the opposition with a straight sets treble, Jim having to settle for a double after losing 10-12 11-8 3-11 11-9 11-13 to Johnny Worrall, while David Pearson also missed out on a treble, in his first match since early December, losing his final set to Tom

Berryman 8-11 9-11 10-12. The fifth win, by a 6 - 4 scoreline, was an away visit to Milestone 'C', a match that was originally scheduled for December, where Ian, Arran Reeve and Jim were all quickly out of the blocks and were leading 5 - 2 after the Doubles, which Ian & Jim won, beating Carl Edlind & John Evans 13-11 11-6 10-12 11-9, with the match win assured after Jim won his final set, beating Tony Hayden 11-4 11-13 11-7 15-13, to finish with a double, matching Ian's final tally, with Arran also picking up a win in his first outing for six weeks, in defeating Tony Hayden 11-9 11-8 14-12. However, the winning streak was ended when the team travelled to 2nd placed Our Lady of Peace 'E', where Ian, Jim and David Pearson could each only win one set, thus losing 3 - 7. However, in total 42 games were played and no quarter was given, Ian being the first player to take Ralph Philips to five games, just losing out 12-10 12-14 12-14 11-9 7-11.

The addition of Jim Warren and his mate Ian Davenport, has boosted the winning potential of this side and although this team has probably got too much ground to make up, to break into the top three, 4th place is a definite possibility, with Tidmarsh 'E' their likely rivals for this position. Anthony Reeve is still this team's star player, averaging 83%, with both Ian and Marko Madzar over 50%, then Jim and David Pearson, both with over 40%, followed by Arran Reeve and Simon Blake, both with over 30%. On this basis, if this team can avoid being broken up, then they are definite contenders for the Divisional title next year. On the Doubles front, there were three wins and three losses, one loss causing the previously undefeated David Pearson & Anthony Reeve to lose their 100%, the new combinations of Ian Davenport & Anthony and Jim Warren & Ian, both winning one and losing one, which means that with one win from one match played, Anthony & Jim now join Marko Madzar & David Pearson and Anthony & Arran Reeve as currently undefeated pairings.

After playing 10 matches, **Sonning Sports 'C'** were languishing at the bottom of the table, with no wins to their name. However, the New Year has obviously invigorated their existing squad, since they have subsequently recorded three wins and a further draw, over the past 5 games, following which they have climbed one solitary position. First up was the visit of Sonning Common & Peppard 'F', who were despatched 8 - 2, with John Scott requiring 13 games to secure his first treble, Michael Byrne and Phil Peat both scoring their first doubles, Michael just losing out on his own treble when Gerry Bacon won the final set 13-11 15-13 11-8, and Michael & John recording their second Doubles win. The following week Michael, Mo Cole and Jude O'Halloran travelled to Kingfisher 'I', where Mo & Jude won the Doubles to edge in front, after which Mo won her final set, beating Derek Crombie 11-4 12-10 13-11, to guarantee at least a draw, with Jude taking the final set 5-11 11-9 12-10 10-12 11-5, in a titanic struggle with Gill Bennett which determined who went home undefeated. This was Jude's first maximum and thanks to

Michael's earlier 11-7 11-8 7-11 11-9 win against Derek, meant that the final result was a match winning 6 - 4.

A strong Sonning Common & Peppard 'G' squad then came, saw and conquered, leaving as 8 - 2 winners, Michael defeating Jim Warren 4-11 13-11 13-11 11-4 to earn his win, while Jude had to keep focused to beat Marko Madzar 11-8 11-7 20-18, Phil Peat managing to take a game off Anthony Reeve but otherwise having no joy. For their away trip to Kennet Valley 'B', Sonning Sports were only able to field two players, but with John Scott and Jude O'Halloran both picking up two wins apiece, as well as the Doubles, they managed to achieve a 5 - 5 draw although, on another day, it might have been a win, since Jude narrowly lost, to Steve Christelow, 10-12 8-11 9-11. Springfield 'E' were the next visitors, Jude recording his second treble to secure their sixth win, on the night, the match finishing 6 - 4 after Michael just lost out on completing his own treble, losing to Colin Jones 4-11 11-7 6-11 12-10 1-11, in the final set, with the Doubles win, when Michael & Jude beat Julian Lancaster & Tom Powell, proving to be crucial. Mo Cole took games off Colin and Julian, but was unable to secure a win.

Despite their large squad, Sonning Sports have suffered from losing one of their players for the rest of the season, and have dropped points as a consequence of only being able to field two players. However, team performances are on the up, although they have a few tough matches ahead of them, at least on paper. Jude O'Halloran is finding his form and is leading the way, on 57%, with John Scott just behind, on 52%. If the others can continue to chip in with singles and doubles, then 12th place should be avoided. On the Doubles front, there have been four wins over the last five matches, Michael Byrne & Jude O'Halloran losing against SC&P 'G', but making good against Springfield. One new pairing was successfully tried, with the result that John Scott & Jude are currently this team's only other undefeated partnership, joining Mo Cole & Michael, who haven't played together since the first match of the season.

Alan Goold, who last played in November, has been ruled out for the rest of the season, so **Springfield 'D'** have entered the transfer market and signed up Johnny Worrall. Springfield were in 10th place after the last Newsletter but, after a calamitous start to 2019, they were on an unwanted streak of six successive defeats and had plummeted to the bottom of the table, with a near insurmountable gap to safety and the avoidance of the wooden spoon. January started with the visit of Our Lady of Peace 'E' and Springfield fielded Tom Berryman, Chris Speight and newcomer Johnny Worrall. However, OLOP were too strong and ran out 10 - 0 winners, although this wasn't an easy victory, as demonstrated by Chris just losing out 11-13 10-12 13-11 9-11 to the undefeated Ralph Philips and Tom being beaten by Chris Bunn 5-11 10-12 9-11. It didn't get any better the following week, when Chris, Johnny and Dave Parkin travelled to Sonning Common & Peppard 'F', Springfield again leaving pointless after another 10

- 0 defeat. However, this was not a simple walkover, with 37 games being played, Chris just missing out 12-10 9-11 9-11 11-8 7-11 to Mike Casserley, while Johnny was close to a win, before losing to Gerry Bacon 1-11 12-10 14-12 8-11 4-11. Johnny took a breather and Tom Berryman stepped back into the fray, for the visit of Kingfisher 'I' and although the match was lost 3 - 7, Chris won twice and Tom won once. Curiously every set was won in only three games and Chris was only denied his opportunity of a maximum after he lost 9-11 12-14 9-11 to Sandeep Burande.

Johnny returned and Chris took a break, for the trip to Sonning Common & Peppard 'G', but the end result was the same, the night ending in a 3 - 7 defeat, the bright points being that Johnny recorded his first win, beating Jim Warren 12-10 8-11 11-3 9-11 13-11, Tom beat David Pearson 11-8 11-9 12-10 and Johnny & Tom earned a further point when they won the Doubles, 12-14 6-11 11-4 11-7 11-8. Chris returned for the visit of Kennet Valley 'B', with Johnny making way, but with Tom and Chris each only picking up the one win, the evening ended in a 2 - 8 defeat. Once again, this scoreline did not truly reflect the energy of the occasion, with 41 games being played. Tom had a busy evening, playing 15 singles as well as the Doubles, starting off well by beating Steve Christelow 11-8 2-11 9-11 11-7 11-7, but then proceeded to lose to Toby Barter 11-6 14-16 4-



JAMIE LI-TELFORD

11 11-8 9-11 and Jamie Li-Telford 12-14 11-5 11-5 8-11 9-11. However, light may be appearing at the end of the tunnel, as the 'D' team had a convincing 7 - 3 win over the 'E' team, their i n t r a - C l u b match being played one week

earlier than originally planned, with Chris Speight recording his third maximum, Johnny Worrall recording his first treble and Tom Berryman beating Tom Powell 12-10 13-11 13-15 11-7 to record a single.

Until this latest win, this recent run of defeats had impacted everyone's averages, with the exception of Maggie Kellermann-Thornton, who has not played since mid-November and is currently top of their averages, with 46.57%, Chris 'Spike' Speight just behind on 45.24%. Dave Parkin has still to add to his win on his debut, but the others are all tied, on 33.33%. On the Doubles front, as reported above, the new pairing of Tom Berryman & Johnny Worrall were the sole winners, over the past six matches, with Dave Parkin & Tom playing twice but still not finding that elusive win, Chris Speight & Tom being reminded that OLOP Doubles teams are a tough nut to crack, while Dave & Johnny lost 1 - 3 on their only outing. However, although Tom

& Johnny lost their second outing, against their 'E' team, they still leap to the top of Springfield's averages, having played two and won one.

Springfield 'E' were in 7th place as 2018 ended and currently find themselves in 9th place, almost mirroring their 'D' team in that they have lost all six matches played this year. Although they lost proposed new signing Johnny Worrall to their 'D' team, they managed to find a replacement in newcomer Tom Powell. However, following their recent intra-Club match, when Johnny won all his sets, the 'E' team are now questioning their extraordinary generosity! Colin Jones, Julian Lancaster and Paul Martin were selected for the first match, away to Tidmarsh 'E', but only Colin and Paul had any joy, both winning one set, meaning that the match was lost 2 - 8. The evening had started very well, as Paul beat John Harland 11-6 5-11 10-12 11-8 11-9 and Colin beat Roger Stevens 11-8 11-5 8-11 5-11 11-7, to put them 2 - 0 up. However, although the next eight sets were lost, it was not without a fight, Paul and Julian both playing 13 singles, with Julian just losing to Roger Stevens 17-19 7-11 11-7 10-12. The losing margin was reduced, when they were beaten 4 - 6 by visitors Milestone 'C', Colin Jones winning two five game contests with Colin Phillips and John Evans, but then losing his final set to Ollie Bonser, thus ending the night with a double, while Marcello Caramma and Paul Martin both defeated Colin Phillips, to record one win each, Marcello's victory a cagey 12-10 11-4 12-10.

For the trip to table toppers Tilehurst Methodists 'C', Tom Powell made his debut and although he didn't win any sets, he came very close in his final set, just losing out to Andrew Stone 8-11 11-7 8-11 11-5 7-11. Colin Jones won his first set of the evening, beating Andrew 12-10 11-9 12-14 11-3, but had no luck thereafter, while Paul picked up two wins after losing the opening set. With the Doubles again being lost, Springfield returned home with a 3 - 7 loss. Marcello, Paul and Julian were selected for the visit of 3rd placed Reading FC 'B', but only Marcello and Paul had any joy, both winning their final sets, thus losing the match 2 - 8. Julian's best table tennis was probably his set against Harry Edwards, which he lost 11-7 6-11 12-14 9-11, while Paul beat Keith Greene and Marcello beat Harry, to deny him his treble. The following week, Colin Jones, Julian Lancaster and Tom Powell travelled to Sonning Sports 'C' and found themselves 5 - 2 down after the Doubles, needing to win the remaining three sets to draw the match. Tom duly stepped up and beat Mo Cole, to record his first win, but Julian's final opponent was Jude O'Halloran, who was in top form, and Julian was unable to stop him from recording his second treble, which meant that although Colin won the final set, to record a double, Sonning Sports just edged the match 6 - 4. In the "free" week, the 'E' team played their 'D' team and ended up losing 3 - 7, Marcello Caramma and Colin both beating Tom Berryman, Colin by an 11-9 11-7 12-10 scoreline, but both losing to Johnny Worrall and Chris Speight, Marcello narrowly losing to Chris 11-8 10-12 9-11 8-11, the two possible consola-

tions being Colin & Marcello's Doubles win, which was the first in eight matches, and Tom Powell's form, despite him losing 10-12 11-13 15-13 7-11 to Tom Berryman and 4-11 11-8 7-11 11-8 6-11 to Johnny Worrall, which augurs well for the future.

These successive defeats have lowered the team's averages, but Marcello Caramma is ahead on 56.76%, followed by Paul Martin on 50%, then Colin Jones, Julian Lancaster and Tom Powell. On the Doubles front, one match has been won, although this hasn't affected the standings, and five matches have been lost, two by the existing partnership of Marcello Caramma & Julian Lancaster, who have won in the past, two by the new pairing of Colin Jones & Paul Martin and one by the new pairing of Tom Powell & Julian. With no undefeated partnerships, from the six pairings tried to date, Marcello & Paul are top, with two wins from three outings, followed by Julian & Paul with one win from two outings.

Having won only two of their last five matches, **Tidmarsh 'E'** have dropped from 4th to 5th place. However, they have matches in hand over the team above them, so I would expect to see them regain the 4th spot soon. They started January with a fine 8 - 2 win over visitors Springfield 'E', Pete Sinclair winning another treble, while John Harland and Roger Stevens both recorded doubles, the additional win thanks to Pete & John's Doubles victory. In a close match, John missed out on a treble when he lost his first set to Paul Martin 6-11 11-5 12-10 8-11 9-11, as did Roger when he lost his first set to Colin Jones 8-11 5-11 11-8 11-5 7-11. The following week they travelled to Our Lady of Peace 'E' and despite Steve Andrews & John winning the Doubles 12-10 5-11 11-6 12-10, they succumbed to a 4 - 6 defeat, Roger's two singles and Steve's one win not being enough, Roger's 10-12 12-10 10-12 7-11 defeat by Chris Bunn the difference between losing the match and drawing it.

Steve, Roger and Mike Bundy were on their bikes the following week, as well, this time visiting Milestone 'C'. However, Milestone were taking no prisoners and only Roger and Mike had any success, both defeating Tony Hayden, Mike winning 14-12 11-9 11-8, to take two points in the 8 - 2 loss. Another close defeat followed, with visitors Sonning Common & Peppard 'F' winning the Doubles and the match 6 - 4, Tidmarsh's points courtesy of a double from Roger and singles from both Mike and John. This match did include Roger's 11-6 13-11 20-18 defeat of Derek Maltby, Roger's 12-14 10-12 5-11 loss to Julian James, John's 2-11 10-12 9-11 defeat by Colin Jones as well as Mike's 12-10 11-9 9-11 8-11 8-11 loss to Julian, any of which could, on another day, have tilted this score in a different direction. Their final match was the postponed fixture against Reading FC 'B' which was originally scheduled for the first week in November. I'm unsure if Reading FC knew what awaited them, following their drive out of town, but Pete Sinclair won all three, as did Steve Andrews, while Mike Bundy won his opening set and Steve & John won the Doubles, meaning that they both opened and closed

this group of matches with 8 - 2 victories.

Pete Sinclair is Tidmarsh's star, with 80.95%, then a gap to Roger Stevens, Steve Andrews and John Harland, who are all above 59%, with Mike Bundy further back on 33%. On the Doubles front, Tidmarsh have won three of their most recent five contests, with existing pairings Steve Andrews & John Harland winning twice, while Peter Sinclair & John won once. The two defeats were incurred by Mike Bundy & Steve and Mike Bundy & John, both these pairings having lost on their only other outing.

Tilehurst Methodists 'C' discovered that two of their players, in a squad of four, were going to be unavailable for a number of weeks in January and February, so made an emergency signing over the New Year, in an attempt to fulfil their commitments. The Methodists had ended 2018 at the top of the table, undefeated having played all other teams. That was soon to change, with the visit of Sonning Common & Peppard 'G' (along with their new signings, Ian Davenport and Jim Warren), who not only won the match but also defeated the Doubles partnership of Roy Hull & Rob James, who had won all three of their previous contests. Although Roy recovered from his opening set defeat, to win his other two sets, Andrew Stone and Rob were only able to win one apiece, the match therefore being lost 4 - 6. A week later, the same team was on the road and although Roy & Rob got back to winning ways, in the Doubles, Kennet Valley 'B' earned themselves a 6 - 4 victory, despite Roy Hull recording a maximum, to hand Methodists their second successive defeat.

The following week, new signing David Bates made his League debut, in the home match against Springfield 'E', winning twice and helping Methodists to a 7 - 3 win, Andrew also adding to his tally with one win, while Roy again led the team with another treble as well as partnering David to his first Doubles win. Five days later, David, Roy and Andrew were on the road again, this time stopping off at Milestone 'C'. A tight contest ensued, with the points being shared in a 5 - 5 draw, thanks to another treble from Roy, a single from David and the Doubles, Roy & David successfully partnering up again. Their match with Tidmarsh 'E' having to be postponed, to the end of the season, meant that their one match advantage over OLOP disappeared, which allowed OLOP to take over at the top.

Roy Hull is still Methodists star player, Rob James has dropped down the averages following a couple of below par performances, Steve Wood has not played this calendar year, but should hopefully be back in action soon, Andrew Stone is picking up regular wins and new signing David Bates has performed well, following his introduction to the League. On the Doubles front, although Roy Hull & Rob James have lost their 100% record and are currently bottom of the team's averages, with 80%, new pairing David Bates & Roy currently have 100%, as do Steve Wood & Roy, and Rob & Steve.



YOUTH DIVISION

by Emma Barraclough



RAJAT SAWANT

December 14th saw the final gathering of 2018 with the final matches in the Grouping Tournament begun in the October half-term. The tournament was in three bands and was split into a main and a consolation event. This meant

that there were six finals to be played on December 14th. The main event in the oldest age band saw a final between Harry Bullock and Rajat Sawant which was won by Harry Bullock. The final in the consolation event for this age band was between Arran Reeves and Rishika Desai and was won by Arran Reeves.

The final in the main event for the middle age band was between Mo Cook and Adrian Mitchell and was won by Mo Cook. The consolation event final was between Yuvam Mittal and Prakhar Gandhi and was

won by Prakhar. The youngest age band saw the main final between Josh Sandland and Om Gore and was won by Om. The consolation event for the youngest players saw a final between Vibha Mali and Harry Harper and was won by Harry Harper. We finished the



evening with some party food.

The Division resumed on January 4th with a fun evening for players and parents and carers.



RUDRESH DESAI

League play resumed on 11th January with the teams now split into two leagues. The evenings of League play since the split into two Divisions have sadly been marked by low attendance which has meant that a number of games have had to be rescheduled or played on different dates.

January 11th saw in Division 1 matches between Lions and Pumas and the Avengers and Raiders. The Lions won 8 - 2 with three wins each for Rudresh Desai and Mo Cook while the Avengers and Raiders drew with three wins for Rajat Sawant. In Division 2 the Trojans played the Panthers with a 6 - 4 win for the Panthers and the Spartans defeated the Jaguars 8 - 2 with three wins each for Gabriel Burch and Josh Sandland.

In Division 1, January 25th saw a draw between Tigers and Pumas with three wins for Rajat Sawant and a 6 - 4 win for Lions against the Avengers with three wins for Mo Cook. In Division 2 the Jaguars and Trojans drew and the Panthers defeated the Strikers 7 - 3. The snowfall on February 1st closed Bluecoat School where the League is played so matches were cancelled for that evening.

We have continued to see a good standard of play this year and hope to see increased numbers for the remaining weeks of play.



OM GORE



MO COOK

TEAM PLACINGS

	Team	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
1	Lions	9	9	0	0	80	6	80
2	Pumas	9	7	1	1	54	36	54
3	Raiders	9	5	1	3	49	41	49
4	Tigers	9	5	0	4	47	40	47
5	Avengers	9	4	2	3	46	44	46
6	Trojans	9	3	0	6	46	44	46
7	Panthers	9	3	1	5	42	47	42
8	Spartans	9	2	1	6	36	54	36
9	Strikers	9	4	0	5	32	58	32
10	Jaguars	9	0	0	9	14	76	14

LEADING AVERAGES

Player	Team	P	W	%
Mo Cook	Lions	23	23	100.00%
Rudresh Desai	Lions	21	20	95.24%
Arran Reeve	Avengers	27	24	88.89%
Harry Bullock	Lions	23	20	86.96%
R. Dharamshi	Trojans	21	17	80.95%
Adrian Mitchell	Pumas	20	16	80.00%
Rajat Sawant	Raiders	23	18	78.26%
Ryan Griffiths	Tigers	21	16	76.19%
San Celik	Spartans	20	13	65.00%
Anay Mistry	Tigers	21	13	61.90%