

Southport Table Tennis Notes

Back to normal with the weather and all the teams will have to play catch up to get the fixtures back on target or face the wrath of the fixture secretary who does a great job keeping us all under control and making sure that we keep to the rules. Although it has been a full week not many cards have trickled their way to me so I'm a little lost for words. One thing that has stood out this week is the number of near whitewashes...or should I say face savers!!! I think it's really difficult when a team loses the first six or seven sets to keep relaxed and try to take even a single set from the opposition because as everyone knows your head goes down and you try just that little bit too hard and the shots you were playing easily in the knock-up just seem to have a mind of their own in the actual game. Those players that have managed to take the one set deserve a special mention.

Jim Irving was the special person for Southport 'A' with a three game to nil win over Julian Dutch of North Meols 'A'. Not easy to take a set when the rest of your opponents include the father and son duo of Paul and Sam Gittins who are ably supported by Ben Aitken. By next season I expect Sam to be ready for the first division and there is little doubt that Paul and Ben would have held their own this season if they had played there.

Paul Lunan of Southport 'B' is another of my special players with a nail biting 3 games to 2 win over Karen Gibson of St Teresa's 'B'. He took the first two games 11:7, 13:11 and then Karen took the third comfortably 11:5 and the fourth closely 11:9. In the fifth Paul took control again to clinch the set by winning the final game 11:6.

The next face saver once again involved a Southport team. This time it was the Southport 'D' team but unlike the other two matches the Southport team was the winning side with the point against them taken by Oliver Moir of North Meols 'D'. I seem to have mentioned Oliver quite a few times this season so he must be doing something right and his win over Andy Hickey is proof of that. A good win it was too in three straight games 11:4, 11:7, 11:8 whilst playing a number two in team. He's ranked below his granddad who is number one and his grandma ranked at three.

The last match I am going to mention briefly is too painful a memory to dwell on for too long as it involves your faithful correspondent in battle against one of the league's most stoic competitors, Brian Crolley. Well that says it all doesn't it? Everyone in the league must know what I went through...two games up and a couple of points ahead in the third with the end just in sight...and then it strikes...Crolleyism for want of a better word. You play to your game plan and it's working a treat, then for no apparent reason you start to doubt it and then you tense a little and a shot or two goes off and then Brian responds with a couple of killer forehands and you've lost the game. You start the fourth with a little trepidation whilst Brian stalks you at the other end of the table like a caged lion about to pounce on any mistake you make and by the time you realise this is all in your imagination you've lost the fourth and it's now 2 games all with the final game imminent. A few deep breaths and the battle begins...a short serve, a chop return, a deep push followed by a gentle roll and wham the balls past you and you retrieve it from the floor. The match carries on with the points equally shared until at deuce in the fifth two clear points are needed for the set. At fifteen all the game is anybody's but it's not to be mine and Brian scrapes through 17:15. Luckily this was the only set and the other nine went to my team of Formby TTC 'B'.

Finally, entries have now closed for the Southport Closed tournament but if you have realised you should have entered then contact the league chairman, Roger Neal to see if there have been any cancellations. Also if anyone would like to donate a prize for the annual raffle to be held on finals night then please bring it/them to the tournament or hand them to a member of the committee.

Southport & District League Results

Division 1

Formby TTC 'C' 3	St Teresa's 'A' 7
Formby HT 'D' 0	Formby HT 'A' 10
Formby HT 'C' 1	Formby TTC 'B' 9

Division 2

Southport 'C' 2	St Teresa's 'C' 8
Formby TTC 'D' 6	Formby HT 'E' 4
Southport 'A' 1	North Meols 'A' 9
St Teresa's 'B' 9	Southport 'B' 1

Division 3

North Meols 'D' 1	Southport 'D' 9
Formby TTC 'G' 3	North Meols 'C' 7

Cup Quarter Finals to be played week commencing 8 February 2010

Anon Cup Quarter Final

Formby HT 'A'	v	Formby HT 'B'
Argyle 'A'	v	St. Teresa's 'A'
Formby HT 'C'	v	St. Teresa's 'C'
Formby TTC 'A'	v	Formby TTC 'D'

Anon Plate Quarter Final

Southport 'E'	v	North Meols 'B'
Southport 'D'	v	North Meols 'C'
Argyle 'C'	v	Southport 'F'
Formby TTC 'F'	v	Formby TTC 'C'

Gunson Cup Quarter Final

Southport 'A'	v	Formby TTC 'F' (120)
Southport 'F' (260)	v	Argyle 'B'
Formby TTC 'D'	v	St. Teresa's 'C'
Paraplegics 'A' (230)	v	Formby TTC 'C'

Gunson Plate Quarter Final

Formby TTC 'G' (180)	v	St. Teresa's 'D'
Formby HT 'C'	v	Formby TTC 'E' (300)
North Meols 'D' (240)	v	North Meols 'B'
Argyle 'A'	v	St. Teresa's 'A'

Sylvia Graham
Press Secretary
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