

## **2011/12 Season Weeks 16 - 22**

### **Match Reports – Division Two**

#### **Hyde Cricket Club 3 v 7 Old Glossop Conservatives**

Forget the zombie films, or Dr. Who, from behind the sofa – if you want x-rated entertainment, come and watch Hyde Cricket Club 'v' Old Glossop Conservatives! Never mind watching from behind the sofa, you'd be safer in the Hare and Hounds. Expletives resounded incessantly off the walls as Messrs. Wilson, Brown, Stansfield and Craig implored the gods to smile on them. Even Peter Woodland was heard to utter 'I say!' Careful Peter! Only Ian Barker refrained, and only because he was too knackered – having played in the Town Championships the day before. The tennis was a curious affair, with so many points thrown away through poor serving, and the double faults probably cost us (H.C.C.) the draw. The game of the night was Les 'v' Ian Wilson. A real surprise, as Les had made short shrift of Ian in the away fixture. Tonight was different however, with Ian in his most formidable 'terrier' role. Les took the first game notwithstanding a few worrying moments, but in the second Ian began snapping away at Les's backhand, not allowing him to get his formidable forehand top-spin going – and it worked, as a frustrated Les dropped the next two games. Les drew on all his experience to level in the fourth and, with the help of yet more double faults, edged the fifth. Les was also involved in a thriller with Peter which he only managed to win in the fifth. He made short work of Mike to run up yet another treble. If only me and Ian had supported him – but we both had a night to forget. Ian's game with Mike was one he will not want to remember. He played like the proverbial 'plonker' in the first two games but then found some form and stormed back to take the next two and go 8 – 2 up in the fifth. But, yet again, a double fault broke his run of points and let Mike in, and he never looked back, allowing Ian only one more point. A remarkable comeback – and well played, Mike. Ian was last seen in the car park wandering around muttering 'How did I lose that' to himself. The doubles was also a close run affair, with the Glossopians taking it in the fifth. So what should have been a draw at least concluded in a 3 – 7 loss, and a salutary lesson in serving. Some excellent tennis played, and an enjoyable night – but let's tone the language down next season, or I'll be getting banned!

#### **Hyde Cricket Club 5 v 5 Glossop Bandits C**

We always look forward to playing against the Bandits, apart from Peter with his 'magic' rubber. Neither Ian or myself can cope with it when he plays his forehand chop, and even Les has struggled. Suffice to say that Ian and me were vanquished with little trouble but, lethal though Peter's chop was, he met his match with Les's top-spin and an intriguing match was eventually won by Les – much to Peter's chagrin. I had my usual humdingers with Barry and Ben, losing to both – though not without honour. Ian had his usual 'five-setter' with Barry, dropping the first but coming back in what was a very close contest until the fifth when it fizzled out as Ian romped home. Ben has been putting in extra practice I'm sure as he has a couple of new serves and is far more consistent than last season, and he gave Les a good run as well. 5 – 4 up going into the doubles and all set for a famous victory, but Peter and Ben had other ideas and, despite dropping a game, were worthy winners. So the match ended all square, which I think everyone would agree was a fair reflection of the night's play. Excellent night's tennis.

#### **Hyde YMCA 'B' 5 v 5 Old Glossop Conservatives**

Old Glossop battled back from 3 – 5 down to snatch a draw in an epic encounter. Martyn Capper was unbeaten having had a rare flawless night. Mike Stansfield deserved something, and beat Peter Green – who was unfortunate not to post a win. The wily old Ian Wilson outfoxed Harry Garside in an excellent match, and won two for Old Glossop.

#### **Strines Dragons 7 v 3 Hyde YMCA Holl. B Res.**

Good win for Strines, although Vernon wouldn't agree as he had a bad night. Peter Fowler decided to give the opposition some coaching and told Dave how to beat Alan Darnell. This is the first time I have ever seen a player being shown how to beat someone on the opposing team – unbelievable.

#### **Romiley Cricket Club B 5 v 5 Strines Dragons**

A tough match for the Cricketers, with Pete Fowler easily winning his three for the visitors. John Ashworth, deputising for Pat Downs, also proved difficult – going down in four in all his matches. Alan Darnell proved even more difficult and, although Jepson and Wood both won, it took five ends. Young Tom Fowler just missed out against Alan, going down 9 – 11 in the fifth. Fowler/Darnell beat Wood/Fowler in four in the doubles.

### **Glossop Conservative Club A 2 v 6 Glossop Conservative Club C**

Fred and Stuart won all three, with Fred having two five-setters against Alan and Eddie. Mark lost in five to Alan. Dave and Eddie lost the doubles in five to Stuart and Fred. A couple of pints enjoyed by everyone afterwards.

### **Glossop Bandits C 7 v 3 Stanley Square C**

*A great night's table tennis, with Peter and Ben on sparkling form, and some long rallies. Steve seems never to run out of comedy material; and some Kit-Kats went missing!*

### **Hyde Cricket Club 3 v 7 Romiley Cricket Club B**

I wrote a few weeks ago about how we all have venues we enjoy playing at, and venues we don't. I didn't name any places we dislike so as not to offend anyone – so, imagine my surprise last night when, after the game with Romiley C. C., their captain Peter Jepson said, 'I really enjoy playing here especially after playing at Romiley on that ruddy carpet!' How ironic, because Romily was prominent in my thoughts when I wrote the original article. Playing T.T. with the table on carpet was bad enough for one night, but to have to do it every home game ... well, 'nuff said. Peter enjoyed out table so much he was practically invincible, and he murdered all three of us – even Les had no answer to his lethal back-hand chop. Next season, Peter, I shall lay a length of Axminster to stand the table on!

The final score was misleading, and we could have easily finished with a draw as every game against Ken went to five – but he managed to win every one. His game with Les was an absolute thriller, with Les taking the first two games at a canter. But Ken stormed back to take the next two and set up a final game that was worth the admission fee alone. Les tried every trick he could think of but Ken had a few of his own and eventually emerged victorious 14 – 12. I also had a superb match with Ken and, at 2 – 1 up, I knew I had to beat him in the fourth as he was improving shot by shot. But he shaded it 12 – 10. I ran out of steam in the fifth, as some of the rallies went on so long that our spectator finished his first pint and was halfway through the second by the end! Ian came close to beating Ken as well, but also ground to a halt in the fifth. Tom made me work really, really hard for my only win of the night, and the long rallies in that game didn't help when I came to play Ken. Ian and Les had too much experience for Tom, but every match is a learning curve for him and I'm sure the games will be much closer next season. Some wonderful tennis tonight, and some good banter as well.

### **Old Glossop Conservatives 7 v 3 Strines Crusaders**

One of those matches which confirms why we all play table tennis. Good competition, good banter, some controversy – makes it worth coming out. Although the Tories won easily in the end it didn't start what way, the first two matches going the way of Strines. Match of the night was Ian against Alan, with Alan being the eventual winner. Peter, Ian and Mike all won two for the Tories. For Strines, Alan won 2 and John won 1.

### **Strines Dragons 8 v 2 Glossop Conservative Club A**

Peter Fowler was in his usual good form, helping the Dragons to another victory. Adam Barton did very well – one to watch for the future!

### **Hyde YMCA 'B' 3 v 7 Glossop Bandits C**

Bandits overcame a good effort from the YMCA. Peter Roberts proved too good for everyone, winning three. Andy Bickley fought very well to beat an in-form Barry Fordham. The unfortunate Pete Green snatched defeat from the jaws of victory against Ben Thancanamootoo. A one-sided doubles gave Bandits a 7 – 3 victory.

### **Stanley Square C 2 v 8 Hyde YMCA Holl. B Res.**

*[Neil Coppard for YM commented] A very enjoyable evening, with some tremendous rallies. [he also appended ...] Never has one man had as many nets in one night as Ian Robinson!!!*

### **Romiley Cricket Club B 8 v 2 Stanley Square C**

The visitors got away to a flying start with Ian Robinson hitting Peter Jepson away in three straight. This turned out to be their only singles win, with Wood (3) and Fowler (3) in very good form – defeating Robinson, Dagnall and Peace. Match of the night saw Fowler and Robinson attack each other, with the youngster winning 11 – 9 in the fifth. Robinson and Dagnall gained some compensation, winning the doubles in four against Wood and Fowler.

### **Strines Crusaders 3 v 7 Hollingworth C**

With the newly laid wooden floor known to start sweating – more than the players – an early finish was needed. No such luck. It was 22.40; the doubles went to five and was played by four skaters. Hollingworth C were triumphant, with Kurt Leech winning three, Lee Chapman two, and Mike Osborn one. For Strines, Gordon Bickley managed two, and Adrian Bellis beat Mike Osborn in five. An enjoyable evening, which is why we all turn out in the first place.

### **Glossop Bandits C 8 v 2 Old Glossop Conservatives**

A night of epic battles, and every match on a knife edge. The score looks like a whitewash for the Bandits, but the match certainly was not. Good laughs, good games, and nice Kit-Kats made for a brilliant night.

### **Glossop Conservative Club A 3 v 7 Hyde Cricket Club**

Lee proved too good in the singles, and also in the doubles with his comedy partner, Billy. Ian Wilson won two for the Con. Club. Eddie decided he didn't want to beat Lee, and also lost a game to Ian 20 – 22, but he managed to beat Ian. Lee won two, and the language test, but only just. A very enjoyable evening with plenty of humour and good table tennis.

*[Lee Brown's comments on the match were as follows :-]*

As I was climbing the stairs up to the Con. Club's room I was contemplating who I would be playing. I knew I would be first on as there was a hold-up on the motorway, and the rest of my team were caught up in it. Could it be Dave, Eddie, or Norman – but no! Imagine my surprise when it turned out to be the Jack Russell of the Glossop League, Ian Wilson .... my nemesis. Ian has at one time in the past slipped me the 'Black Spot' and, no matter what I do, I can't shake it off. He duly saw me off in straight games. I didn't play badly, it's just that he seems to sense everything I try – sticks his bloody bat there – and wins the point! Fortunately, one half of my missing team arrived before I had to go on again and Les got us off the mark, winning easily against Dave. Still no Ian, so I was on again - determined to erase the stigma of losing the last match to nil against the Jack Russell. I then proved to myself that I can play by winning one of the best matches I have played in years. I lost the first game to Eddie quite easily, as a combination of his fast serve to my forehand, and his rather unorthodox smash, had the better of me. I was then 4 – 10 down in the second, and almost down and out, but I came back to win it 12 – 10 with a combination of excellent serving, targeting Eddie's weaker backhand with deep chop, and a few good smashes. I never looked back from then on, and finally won a really keenly contested match. Ian finally arrived and wished he hadn't as he found out he was playing the Jack Russell, who snarled and snapped at his heels and won at a canter. (Do Jack Russells canter?!) Les had a cracking game with Eddie, but Eddie's vicious top-spin, allied to some crafty serves, were too much for the home man, and Les eventually won fairly comfortably. Poor Dave had had a night to forget, as Ian found some form and despatched him with some good smashing – which then brought Les and Ian to the table. Les, finishing with another treble, eventually brought Ian to heel, but only after dropping a set. I won my last match against a luckless Dave, and Les and our No. 4, Billy, emerged victorious from the doubles to give us a 7 – 3 victory. There was just enough time after the match to take the Jack Russell for walkies ... down the stairs, out of the door, down the street, round the corner and into the bar ... and a pint. There's a good boy!

PS The Jack Russell even swears like a trooper when he's scoring! A good night's tennis, and good hosts. Cheers, Lee.

### **Strines Crusaders 1 v 9 Glossop Bandits C**

A City 'v' Wigan fixture in which the top team won a match played on a Friday, not for the benefit of Sky viewers I can assure you. That said, there was much good quality table tennis – attack and defence in equal measure. There was an early finish too, as only three of the matches went to four games. Peter Roberts and Ben Thancanamootoo won all their matches, and Barry Fordham lost to Gordon Bickley. An enjoyable evening, but both teams will miss Division 2 next season.

### **Old Glossop Conservatives 4 v 6 Hyde YMCA Holl. B Res.**

Another excellent, competitive game which was, once again, played in the right way – with banter and humour. Dennis (3) and Vernon (3) were the winners for Hyde, whilst Pete, Ian and Mike all won one for the Tories. Pete and Ian won the doubles (just) in the last. Match of the night (just) was Vernon and Mike, Vernon eventually winning 21 – 19 in the fifth. Vernon had a particularly busy night, playing 20 games in total. The win by the Tories in a five-setter doubles match was the first 5-set win in nine! That's how close the last two matches have been. See you all next season!

### **Hyde Cricket Club 6 v 4 Glossop Conservative Club C**

Have you ever tried playing table tennis with a dislocated shoulder? Don't! It's not recommended unless you're an idiot over the age of sixty! Not that I'm using this as an excuse for my lamentable performance last night ... oh, all right I am. But whenever I play Fred I need an excuse. I was doing all right for a while, until I went for the big shot and it popped out again. It's an old injury, and it had done the same last week, but I thought a week's rest would've cured it – but no. From then on I knew the game had gone, and the next two as well. Fortunately Les was on superb form, showing no mercy to Fred, Mark and Stuart – none of whom could give him a game, although Stuart did rally briefly in one of his games, but Les eventually saw off his challenge. Ian was his usual self, mixing some fantastic tennis with the ridiculous – and almost inducing a profanity from Fred.... I said almost! The match went to five games, Fred taking the second 19 – 17. He took the third as well, but Ian fought back well to take the last two. He also had a five-setter with Stuart – and here's where the ridiculous comes in. He had won the fourth game fairly comfortably, to six, but lost concentration completely and lost the fifth – to two. You never know what you're going to get with Ian! As he proved against Mark, winning imperiously in straight games. Five four up, and a win in the doubles needed for the match...enter the Odd Couple. Les and Bill, combined age 136, squabbling age 6! Bill was already in Les's bad books for taking a call on his mobile just as Les was serving in his match against Fred, and Bill was somewhat miffed at the rollicking he got. Good captaincy wasn't it – putting them on together? Suffice to say that, with the help of Ian – the scorer from Hell – we nearly had them changing partners at one stage. It was a close call, with a couple of 12 – 10 games, but the Odd Couple came through, and we emerged from a tight contest with a very good win – with no help from me. Excellent night's tennis, and good company.

### **Hyde YMCA Holl. B Res. 9 v 1 Strines Crusaders**

Strines Crusaders fear that they will now be relegated whilst Hyde hope sincerely that they will not be promoted! Good enjoyable table tennis all night long.