

## ODE TO THE ORGANISERS

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(A tribute to those who devote so much time and energy to making our tournaments so enjoyable for everybody else.)

Who says that Summer's not the time for Fives  
And Summer holidays without your wives?  
With WAYNE and FRED hard by the river Exe  
A glorious week of beer, Fives and - friendship.  
And better, far, than restauranting in France  
Is Y.M. Fives Club's Autumn Dinner-Dance;  
For worthy of a thousand miles travel  
Is FRED's and DANNY's Spanish Dance by Ravel.  
After the red the white rose duly calls  
To Halifax to play with DUNCAN's balls.  
Lancastrian skill, however, proves too great  
And Heath Old Boys can only win the plate.  
Now Manchester again, where FREDERICK's aims  
Are to provide the youth with fun and games;  
There's lots of both and when the playing stops  
St. Dunstan's, Paul's and Bradfield are the tops.  
Then West where DUNSCOMBE always pulls them in -  
The biggest tournament and hard to win;  
But not for WAYNE, unbeatable, at least  
When his sole conqueror here is way out EAST.  
B.U.S.(E)F. at Bedford is a trifle damp  
Till GARDNER, armed with many a drying lamp,  
Beats back the waters and so gives a chance  
To champions KEMP and senior student DANCE.  
The National Singles ends the year in style  
And WAYNE (eleventh time) wins by a mile.  
The organiser's work is blessed by fate  
And JEREMY again brings home the plate.  
Straight from their revels schoolboys take the train

On New Year's Day to Sherborne once again,  
Where genial MIKE CLEAVER calls the shots  
And Paul's and Dunstan's carry off the pots.  
Next DARBY summons all to Hackney Down  
To seek the Puckle Cup and win renown.  
A North-South final leaves the South one up  
And MELANIE awards two DAVES the cup.  
Now stately Durham on its lofty hill  
Invites Fives-players to show off their skill  
At REID's command - a mighty player of yore,  
And even now he's not exactly poor,  
Defeating champion HEBDEN in a double,  
But HOWE and HERON win with little trouble.  
GEOFF SHERRATT's G.M.C.'s the next event,  
When everybody's energy is spent  
Deciding who's to be the number two  
To Y.M.'s favourite son - well, you know who!

While DAVE and IAN win the pairs again  
Defeating all with ease if not disdain.  
Barnes Bridge, the trophy next competed for,  
Brings Winchester Fives men to Sedbergh's door,  
DICK LYON's guests, and some the buttress foils,  
While BARR and CONSTANTINE divide the spoils.  
Next clubs compete to see which one's the best  
And in the final four of those who Jest  
Go down before the might of WAYNE and co.  
While STEVE and DAVID organise the show.  
DAVE GOODWIN's 'Schools' provides a hectic week  
Of hard-fought Fives and many an anxious beak  
Is left with scarcely one unbitten nail  
As Taylors', Paul's and Dunstan's all prevail.  
The National Doubles now - alas, one seed  
Is out before play starts; his iron steed  
Does SCHROETER damage (happily not spinal)  
But four great players provide an epic final.  
And so to Bedford, GEOFF, DAVE, JERRY call,  
Where best - and oldest - come to smite the ball.  
WAYNE, STEVE and ALEX all retain their cups  
But HEBBLETHWAITE and PRIGMORE change their 'ups'  
For 'downs' and bravely yield their title claim  
And I at last - Thanks, ROGER - win a game.  
The season ends a very long way North  
In Edinburgh, quite near the Firth of Fourth.  
CHRIS HALL's in charge whose principal delight  
Is Rugby Fives by day and Scotch by night.

WAYNE adds another title to his tally  
 But only after many a sparkling rally  
 As WYNN, who takes a very early ball,  
 Extends him fully up to fourteen-all.  
 Next day nostalgia is in the air  
 As REID and GARDNER - that redoubted pair -  
 Show all the skills that formed their magic blend;  
 But STEVE and ADAM get there in the end.  
 And so the season ends - a few weeks rest,  
 Then down to Exeter for the South-West.  
 Till then I'll recollect from time to time  
 The tournaments recorded in this rhyme  
 And say to those who organised them all  
 'Thank you for having me; I've had a ball'.

ALASTAIR MACKENZIE

May 1984

A.I.ff. MACKENZIE, Esq.

RIPOSTE

When socialising with Mackenzie,  
 All is laughter, wine and frenzy,  
 But play at Fives 'against ffolliot  
 And fun and games are wholly out.

He hones his frame with wine and joggin,  
 And bread and ch ese and pints of Noggin,  
 And quotes from Shaw midst gasp and pant,  
 "My mind is perfectly free from Cant".

He learnt that, late one Scot's pip emma,  
 Whilst dipping in The Doc's Dilemma,  
 In circumstances rather rude.  
 (He reads while walking in the nude)

He likes to win and hates to lose,  
 (and if he does he blames the booze)  
 And should you wish to get a callous stare,  
 Just claim a let from my friend Alastair.

All this, of course, is just my joke,  
 He's really not a bad old soak,  
 For in our times we've had some fun,  
 As Friend and Pres: he's number one.

DAVID HEBBLETHWAITE