

DR DARTS' NEWSLETTER

Issue Ten December 2010 / January 2011

www.patrickchaplin.com



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Dr Darts Newsletter is sponsored by Winmau Dartboard Company

INTRODUCTION

Welcome each and every one of you to Issue 10.

Clearly *DDN* is working as it appears to be capable of cheering people up. Here's what Mick S. wrote about Issue 9:

'I came in from work today feeling fed up (had a bad day) turned on my computer opened e-mails, saw yours and instantly read the Newsletter. Like a breath of fresh air. Once again thank you Patrick. Roll on next month. Take care.'

For Warren in Australia *DDN* is becoming an addiction. He writes "I got the latest edition of *DDN* thank you very much. I always look forward to getting it once a Month as it's my historical and fact fix!" It looks as though *DDN* is becoming all things to all subscribers.



Did you manage to catch any of the Grand Slam of Darts last month? We saw some fantastic darts and congratulations to Scott Waites in staging a massive recovery from 8-0 to take the title from the grasp of James Wade 18-16. I'm always looking for original material for *DDN* so instead of featuring Scott I thought subscribers would like to see what happened at the end of the Co Stompe / Colin Lloyd match as Co adopted his victorious position. (Image courtesy of Lawrence Lustig / PDC) It looks painful but I understand it wasn't.

As the end of 2010 approaches I've had a brief look back and looked at the year in the context of my work. Clearly the best bits for me have been the publication of my book *The Official Bar Guide to Darts* and the launch of *DDN* last March. Research-wise one of the most exciting discoveries this year has been an archive of papers relating to the set up of the National Darts Association of Great Britain (NDAGB); papers donated to my archive by a generous lady from the south coast. I am still going through these important documents and will be preparing something for *DDN* next spring.

The worse news was the collapse of the publishing company that was to publish Bobby George's and my book *Scoring for Show: Doubles for Dough*. However, the good news is that we have very recently secured another publisher. I will keep you all informed of progress in the months to come.

All that's left for me to do is to wish you all the best for the holiday season and a very Happy Christmas to those who celebrate the festival.

Here's the last *DDN* for 2010...

FROM PREVIOUS ISSUES

(a) WINMAU World Masters

In Issue 9 I reported on my trip up to Hull for the WINMAU World Masters and my 'Introduction' to that issue featured the Youth winners Zoe Jones and Reece Robinson and between them the suited-and-booted Sales and Marketing Director of WINMAU, Ian Flack.



What wasn't revealed in those articles was the fact that Ian is a bit of a rocker. At the dinner / dance on the Saturday night guests were entertained by Barnsley band *Here's Jonny* and late into the evening during their version of the Kings of Leon's *Sex on Fire* Ian took to the stage. The accompanying photograph taken by a WINMAU employee (who wishes to remain anonymous) shows 'Flackie' in action.

(b) "What's the Story?" – The Oasis Dartboard



Centre stage in the competition in Issue 8 was the 'Oasis' dartboard used in the artwork for the band's 'Stop the Clocks' CD. Ian Flack wrote to say "I just thought you may be interested to know that we [WINMAU] produced the dartboard for Oasis via a promotional company called Paraphanalina."

(c) Darts in Glasgow

In last month's issue under the 'Two Nations' item I reported that 'The Wizard of Oz' would be appearing in Cambuslang, Glasgow on 18th March next year. James Hope jnr, who originally told me about the event, has now dropped me a line to say that the Simon Whitlock night at the Cambuslang Institute has been cancelled. However, James adds that darts are still coming to the Institute as Bobby George and Eric Bristow have been booked at the venue for Saturday 11th March 2011.

And talking about Simon...

(d) Wheelchair Darts

Last issue I brought subscribers up to date with the great work Russ Strobel is undertaking in Australia with regard to his Wildfire 137 Dart Frame designed to assist wheelchair to play competitively against able-bodied darters.

Well, it just gets better and better for Russ and his project as recently he has confirmed another exciting development. Russ tells me that Simon Whitlock has agreed to become the ambassador for The Wildfire 137. This can only add prestige to Russ' work.

(e) 1949 Darts Players' Annual – The St. Dunstan Four

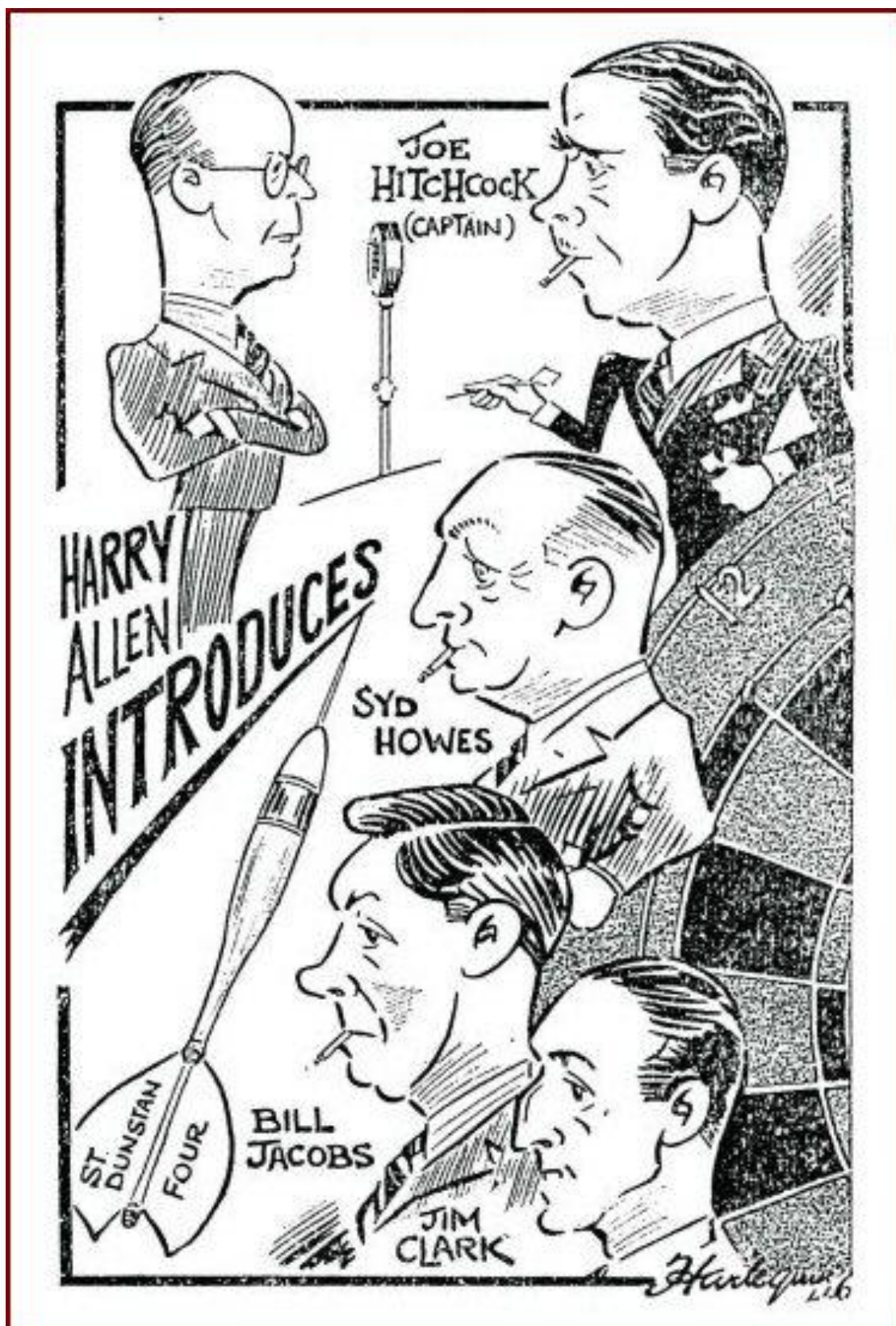
Dave B was enthralled by the fact that the illustration accompanying this follow-up piece in Issue 10 showed the annual to contain mention of 'The St. Dunstan Four. This British charity for war-blinded ex-servicemen is near to Dave's heart and he is a regular supporter of the cause. He wrote

"Naturally I am wondering how you play darts when you cannot see the board. Have I got the wrong message perhaps? Can you help?"

Here's my reply to Dave:

'... 'The St. Dunstan Four' were sighted darts players, captained by the late, great Joe Hitchcock who played darts in exhibitions and toured the country during the period 1945-1950(-ish) raising funds for St. Dunstan's. Surprisingly, St. Dunstaners (or in fact any blind person) can play darts. The way they used to play back then was to have a piece of string pinned to the bull's-eye which was then pulled tight and handed to the blind player standing at the oche. This way the player could assess the exact position of the bull. They then released the string; the string was removed from the bull and then they threw their darts. I wrote an article for the *St. Dunstan's Review* (issue dated October 1989) about the team; the magazine of course also being published in cassette form.'

The cartoon shows the Four as they were in 1946 and appears courtesy of *The Dart*.



TREVOR LLOYD



Sad news indeed that Trevor Lloyd, long-serving President of the Caribbean Darts Organisation died suddenly on Friday 5th November.

It happened on the second evening of major tournament play at the 2010 Brydens Barbados Darts Festival organised by Michael Heal. Michael told me, “Trevor finished chalking a game, entered into a conversation with darter Anthony Forde and suddenly collapsed. He had suffered a massive heart attack and died in the ambulance on the way to the hospital.”

Michael added, “Trevor was a Scot who spent most of his career in the financial sector and in the course of his stewardship of the Caribbean Darts Organisation (CDO) from 1990 there were many Caribbean darts

players who would have counted him as a close friend rather than some aloof, distant, blazered administrator. Trevor loved the Caribbean and Caribbean darts players.

Perhaps his greatest achievement was to give to Caribbean darts players the opportunity for one of them to take part in the Ladbrokes.com World Darts Championship. And he would have delighted in the way that they have conducted themselves at this event over the years – none more so than Anthony Forde of Barbados who nearly caused the biggest upset of all time in his game against the current title holder Raymond Van Barneveldt in 2007.”

In honour of Trevor, Andrew Lewis, CEO of Brydens, the title sponsors of The Barbados Darts Festival, to rename the PDC qualifying event “The Trevor Lloyd Caribbean & South American Masters”.

Michael told me “Trevor leaves a wife Francina, a daughter Sherina and a son Ryan and thousands of darts players from the Caribbean, the USA and Canada to mourn his passing.”

(The image of Trevor appears courtesy of Michael Heal.)

THE PERRANPORTH SPRING DART

The following article is about a most unusual set of darts.

Its inclusion in this issue of *DDN* is inspired by subscriber Steve P. who is an avid collector of darts memorabilia. He told me recently, “I love the history of darts but getting the info is like pulling teeth. My prize possession is a set of Victory Spring Darts (See photo) which I believe they were made in a rehab factory celebrating the Battle Of Britain Victory (Correct Me If I Am Wrong), my set of these darts are the only set I have seen with their original flights.”



They are indeed very rare but I am pleased to say that I also have a set of these unique ‘spring darts.’ In November 2002 a set of darts fell into my possession: darts of a construction I had never seen before. The box bore the legend ‘*The Victory Set – Spring Flight Darts*’ and ‘*Made in Perranporth Cornwall.*’ I had never before seen darts made out of springs and decided to investigate. What follows is the essence of an article I wrote for *Darts World* back in 2003 and which is reproduced here with permission.

First thoughts were that the Perranporth Spring Company made the darts but at least three readers were able to put me straight on that. ‘*The Victory Set*’ – with their patriotic white, red and blue flights (one of each colour) – was manufactured shortly after the Second World War by George Cornish, owner of the Red House Garage, as a sideline under a subsidiary name of ‘*Britannic Spring.*’ I wrote to the local newspaper the *West Briton* hoping that readers could help. I was not disappointed.

West Briton reader David Harvey recalled, as a child, that the garage was used during the war to manufacture parts for use ‘in the construction of military armament.’ David told me

“We used to wander around the back of the premises and take away the long coil pieces of turned metal from the lathes which was thrown out as waste...we tried many times to look inside...we never managed to ascertain what was happening. More often than not, we were seen and chased away, usually by Mr. Cornish himself.”

After the war, David informed me that only two things being produced from those premises – one was spring darts, the other plastic windmills on sticks for children. He remembered that the darts were quite a novelty at the time although they were a little on the heavy side.

Rex Trewartha, another *West Briton* reader informed me that the inspiration for the spring dart had come from George Cornish’s Works Manager a man named ‘Arkie’ Hore. Arkie was not only a darts enthusiast but also, according to Rex, ‘a genius.’ Rex, who was Managing Director of Perranporth Springs from 1948-1978, recalled the method Cornish used to construct the dart. The spring was coiled off by hand on a conical mandrel and then into a cone, the point being dropped in and then held in place by the constriction of the coil of the spring. David Harvey stated that the darts were made from two springs, the larger spring forming the body of the dart, whilst the smaller spring held the red, white and blue flights in place, that spring being ‘screwed’ into the larger spring to complete the dart.

Mrs. Howard of Portreth told me about when she purchased a set of the Perranporth spring darts in 1944 from a newsagent/gift shop and playing with them in a local club. She believes that the darts were possibly made out of ‘off-cuts of bed springs’ and were supplied to the NAAFI. Mrs. Howard added that the individual red, white and blue flights appealed to not only the English dart players but also to the American servicemen stationed nearby and the French. Mrs. Howard said that the darts were “Quite good to play with” but they were not on sale very long. Rex confirmed that the darts were not sold in great numbers.

The importance of the Perranporth Spring Dart is that, as far as is known, it is unique. The general assumption has always been that wooden, brass and then tungsten was the established historical sequence of darts manufacture. The Perranporth Spring Dart has effectively rewritten this element of darts history.

In a future issue I hope to be able to present an article about the most collectable of darts the Unicorn *Silver Comet*.

(My thanks to Steve P. not only for raising the issue of the Perranporth Spring Darts with me but also for providing the accompanying image.)

‘BRAVEDART’ - JAMIE HARVEY – EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW



A couple of months ago I was thrilled when one of Scotland’s most famous darters, Jamie ‘Bravedart’ Harvey subscribed to *DDN*. Jamie had always been on my list of darts legends to track down and interview but in the end Jamie found me first. I was very pleased indeed when Jamie agreed to answer my questions.

Jamie is a self-confessed ‘late starter’ in darts not playing at the top level until he was in his late 20s. (The image shows Jamie at one of his earliest tournaments.) Up until then Jamie had had the odd throw at a dartboard in bars with friends but nothing serious. Then he effectively caught the ‘dart bug’ and began practicing for seven hours a day. After a year Jamie played his first-ever league match. Jamie told me, “I was shaking like a leaf. I missed everything I went for on the board. It was then I knew there was

more to darts than just practice; the head as well.”

His early darting influences include the man Jamie calls ‘a legend’ Eric Bristow MBE who also became a personal friend. Jamie was also influenced by the late Scottish international darts player Joe Kennedy. Jamie said, “I became great friends with Joe who sadly died of cancer about five years ago. He is dearly missed.”

Jamie, a jointers mate by trade for Scottish Power, played county darts for Renfrewshire for around ten years. Jamie was one of the sixteen ‘rebels’ who crossed over to the World Darts Council (later the Professional Darts Corporation) in 1993/94 and was subsequently banned from playing in any BDO tournaments or league. Before the ban Jamie represented Scotland more than twenty times and was the first ‘banned’ player to be picked to play for his country again as the ‘political’ situation eased.

Never a full-time professional Jamie found it hard to combine darts playing, regular practice and a full-time job. Going full-time was a gamble he was not prepared to take because of his wife Marie and children Steven and Angela. Jamie told me, “It was very hard. I would have loved to have gone full-time but it simply wasn’t possible. The money at darts at the time just wasn’t worth doing.”

Despite this Jamie has proved an immensely popular player. (The second image shows Jamie with piper Jim Campbell who sometimes piped Jamie to the stage.) Nicknamed ‘Bravedart’ by Sky Sports and previously ‘The Tartan Terror’ by the tabloid press, Jamie cites his first major breakthrough in darts as being when he won the Men’s Pairs with fellow Scot Ronnie Sharp in the Europe Cup VIII in Finland in 1992. Jamie said, “Ronnie and I beat Phil Taylor and Alan Warriner 4-2 in the semi-finals and faced a couple of

Finnish boys [*Kexi Heinaharju and Aulis Nissenen*] in the final.” The Scottish duo came from 2-0 to beat the Finnish lads 4-3. It was the first time in the history of the Europe Cup that Scotsmen had won the Pairs title.



Throughout a very successful and intense few decades in darts in which Jamie earned a reputation as one of the hardest partiers on the circuit Jamie’s career was cut short when he was diagnosed with throat cancer. Jamie told me, “I was scared to go to the doctors because I knew there was something wrong. Eventually my son Steven dragged me to hospital. I arrived at 1 p.m. and was operated on at 4 p.m. I thought I was a gonner.” The emergency operation involved the removal of Jamie’s voice box. He said that he would not have been alive today if it wasn’t for his wife and son.

Jamie admits that it will be a long, hard road to full recovery. He has to attend hospital for three-monthly check-ups but admits he is lucky to be alive. He told me, “I live from day to day and it’s good to still be here and see my grandchildren grow up...”

Maintaining his love of the sport of darts ‘Bravedart’ informed me that he played his first ‘proper tournament’ recently. He said, “My nerves were good. I won my first round game 3-0. I played really well, hitting a 180 in the second leg. I was very pleased to with the way I played but got beat in the second round by the eventual winner who played in the World Championships at Lakeside last year, so I was not ashamed of myself.” Jamie then added, “It was good to be back on the oche again. I hope it’s the first of many events. Here’s hoping I’ll get a sponsor and get on the circuit again.”

I’m sure you all join me in wishing ‘Bravedart’ the very best of darts and good fortune in 2011.

DARTS PUB CURRIES FAVOUR

I am grateful to Mat C for bringing to my attention the following article from the *Western Daily News* dated Monday November 15th 2010. The article stated:

A Wiltshire pub is stepping up to the oche to claim the crown of the biggest darts pub in the West.



The Swiss Chalet in Swindon has five dart boards in constant use on week nights, with no fewer than 28 teams calling it their home turf.

Landlord John Honeyman said the game has mushroomed over the past few years, ever since the word got out that he treated home teams to post-match curries instead of the usual curly sandwiches. Now, there is almost always a darts match on in the pub.

He said, "It makes for a fantastic atmosphere, but the logistics can be a bit of a nightmare if I get it wrong.

"It's such a sociable game and everyone gets on well. I wanted to thank them for coming to the pub s instead of offering the teams the usual after-game snacks of curly sandwiches, we decided to cook curries and casseroles after their games, and our secret got out."

Brewery boss George Arkell said the pub in Gorse Hill had cornered the market in darts. He said: "Darts have taken over from live music to a great extent at The Swiss Chalet. This pub has succeeded in adapting to what the locals want."

The writer of the article then asked "Does your pub have more than 28 teams? Email us as wdnews@bepp.co.uk." That's only for darters in the west country of England but it set

me wondering if *any* pub *anywhere* on the planet can boast more than 28 teams. Perhaps you can let me know.

It also set my old memory banks flying back to those wonderful darts nights at the Blue Boar, Maldon back in the 1980s and our away matches where the food provision at away matches was sometimes questionable; curly sandwiches, dubious fillings, etc. Those were the days!

Also, I am always on the look out for unusual darting snippets from newspapers from anywhere so why not e-mail me via my website if something interesting turns up in your local newspaper and I'll see if I can feature it in a future issue of *DDN*.

BACK TO THE GRAND SLAM...

It seemed clear to me that the crowd at the Grand Slam at times was unruly and totally disrespectful of the players, especially as they were throwing. In the UK daily paper *Daily Mirror* on 15th November Ted 'The Count' Hankey told a reporter "I'm not going to get involved with the crowds any more – let them do whatever they want to. I'll just concentrate on my job."

That didn't seem to be the case but not only was Ted critical of the crowd but also Phil Taylor seemed at a loss to know what can be done to tone the crowd down. One of my friends told me

"The PDC have created a Frankenstein's monster, and I don't see how they can put the stopper back in the bottle. The worrying thing is that the PDC type crowd behaviour is leaking into the BDO events - especially at Lakeside. Can't expect the casual fans to understand the difference between the PDC (an entertainment corporation) and the BDO (a sports body) - as far as they're concerned it's all just darts, and if you can chant and shout during one, you can do it during the other.

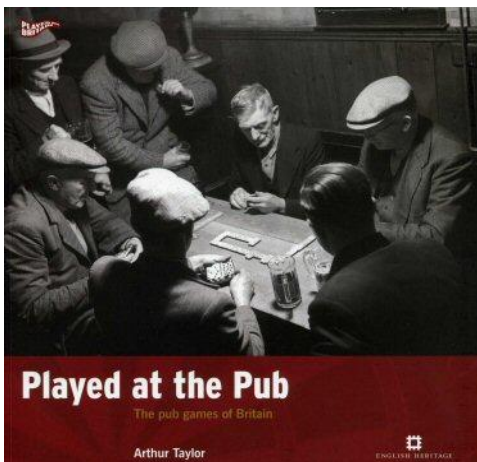
I don't necessarily want to wander into the realm of a darts forum over this but I was wondering how others feel about the matter. Is such behaviour detrimental to the sport or should the professional players act professional and shut out the cacophony of sound that permeates darts these days?

One or two older darters have told me it used to be that noisy back in the days of the *News of the World* darts Grand Finals. Is that true? The thousands of people in the attached photo taken at the 1956 Grand Finals (Image: *News of the World*) seem fairly sedate. Are we simply returning to the 'good old days'?



I look forward to receiving your comments.

BROTHERS IN PUB GAMES



In earlier issues I made mention of Arthur R. Taylor's book *Played at the Pub* (Swindon: English Heritage, 2009). Arthur is the authority on pub games and I was thrilled when he and his editor Simon Inglis asked me to become involved in the book project in 2008. I helped Arthur with the darts chapter of his book and like to think that I have contributed in some small way to the success of his book.

Thus I was thrilled to learn that on 10th November Arthur travelled up to London to receive the Katherine Briggs Award from the Folklore Society, for *Played at the Pub* for the 'Most significant contribution of the year to Folklore Studies'. Arthur received £200 and an engraved goblet and was in his own words 'chuffed to pick up the Award'. Arthur told me, "Forty-two books entered, many of them serious stuff from Yale University Press, Oxford University Press etc. I am told the three judges were unanimous, which startled me." Why so Arthur? After all *Played at the Pub* earlier also picked up the Journalist of the Year Award from the Guild of Beer Writers.

For anyone interested in pub games history *Played at the Pub* is the authoritative work on the subject. Trust me. I'm a doctor.



(The image shows Arthur and me celebrating at the launch of *Played at the Pub* in August 2009.)

WAYNE'S WORLD OF DARTS

In his popular 'Darts People' column in the June 1989 issue of *Darts World* magazine top darts journalist Wayne Baker wrote 'OOOPS! Seems that I almost gave darts administrator Barry Davies the shock of his life when he opened the pages of last month's magazine.'

What had Wayne done to fear something might happen to Barry? Wayne continued:

'There in black and white were details of the resurrected Ansells' [brewery] British Ladies Pentathlon which he is organising. He was delighted to see the story but gasped when he saw that the prize money had rocketed to £8,000 with £2,000 on offer to the winner.'

The trouble was that the actual *total* prize purse was £2,000 with £800 for the winner! Wayne admitted to the typing error and Barry pondered, 'It would be lovely to have eight grand to offer the women, after all they have had a raw deal in recent years with regard to prize money.'

Unless someone can correct me it was not until *twelve years* later, in 2001, that a prize fund of £8,000 was actually available to the lady darters (the inaugural Women's World Darts Championship) with Trina Gulliver lifting the title and a cheque for £4,000 at Lakeside in January that year. Sadly such prize funds for the ladies remain few and far between...

Wayne has served the darting community for many years and I admire his work greatly. He is also probably the fittest darts journalist around and has a passion for cycling (trikes to be precise). You don't know what a trike looks like? Well, here's an image of Wayne in action in competition in Belgium in 2008.



RYAN'S WORLD OF DARTS STATISTICS

I know a lot about darts but I know little about statistics which means that I know very little about darts and statistics. Each to his own...

I was, therefore, very surprised back in May 2009 to receive an approach from Ryan Tibshirani, then a second-year PhD student at Stamford University, USA who was 'preparing a paper about some statistical issues pertaining to darts.' Fortunately for me Ryan was only asking for advice and possible sources relating the research into the numbering of the 'standard' dartboard. I provided some data and sources and since then Ryan and I have kept in regular contact.

Ryan has gone on from success to success and in 2010 came over to Britain to deliver an academic paper to the prestigious Royal Statistical Society titled 'A statistician plays darts' which included 'modelling a dart throw as a two-dimensional Gaussian random variable.' I understand the paper was very well received.

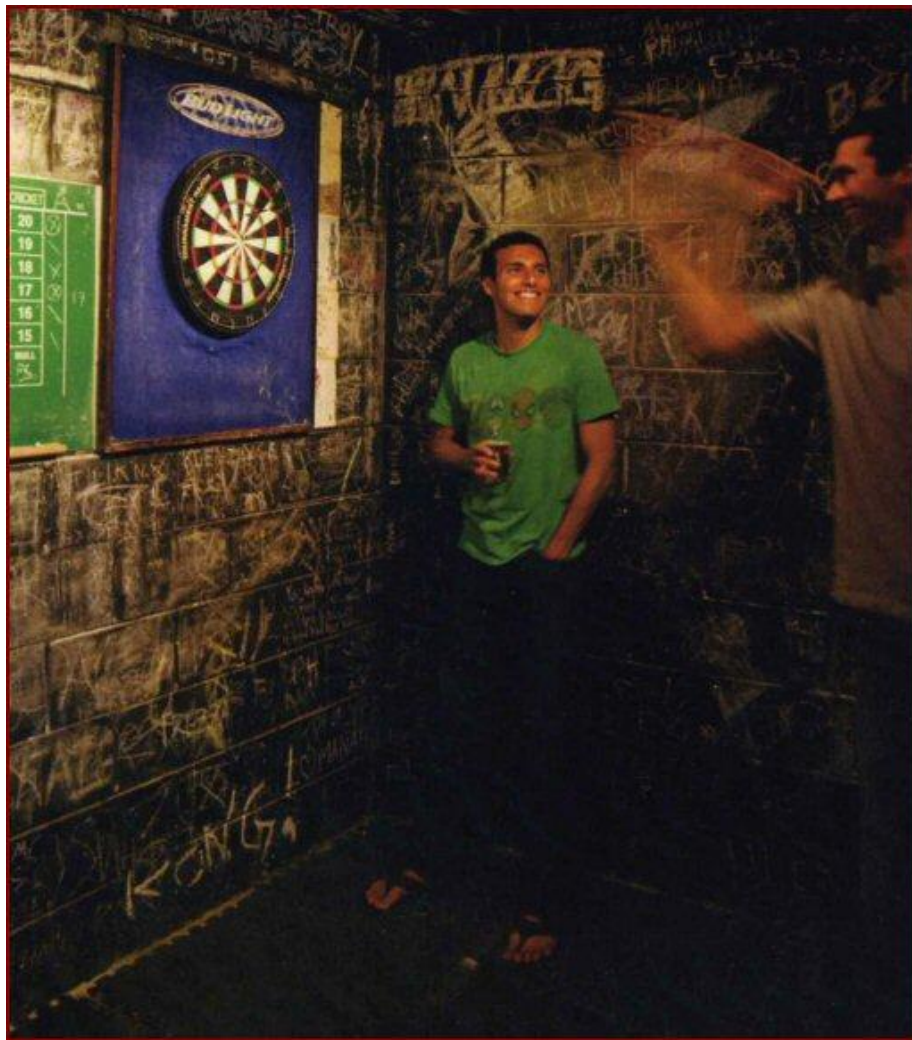
Before coming over to Britain Ryan e-mailed me to say that he had carried some other research, this time into darts players. He wrote:

"I've looked at Wikipedia - a "trustworthy" source for data, I know! - and all of the pages they have on professional darts players. They had 345 pages, 182 were about British players (52.75%). The rest were pretty scattered across the countries. So at least the

majority of the "popular" darts professionals are British.” Ryan provided a pie chart to illustrate his point.

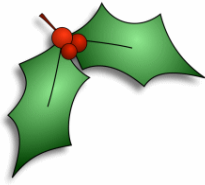
Whilst most of Ryan’s research – no matter how hard I try – is way, way over my head – this I understood yet I marveled at the work involved in that single exercise. I am thrilled that Ryan (with his colleagues Andrew Price and Jonathan Taylor) has the depth of knowledge to take the study of darts down such complex routes as, for example, ‘using the EM algorithm, for a player to obtain a personalized heat map’. Such study can only be for the overall good of our sport and subscribers interested in the application of statistics to our beloved sport are recommended to visit at www-stat.stanford.edu/~ryantibs/darts/. There you can discover using Ryan’s ‘heat maps’ whether you are an ‘Amateur’, ‘Above Average’ or ‘Godlike’ darts player.

I regret not being able to meet Ryan while he was over here in the UK but hope that we can meet up at some stage in the future. I also wish Ryan all the very best in the future for his research and a successful conclusion to his PhD.

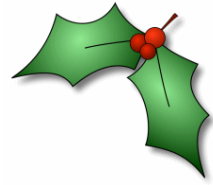


(The image shows Ryan undertaking some serious research at a local bar.)

THE HOLIDAY SEASON



The holiday / Christmas season is upon most of us and what better way to celebrate than with a few messages from my most famous subscribers...



Happy Holidays



Three-time World Darts Champion John Lowe writes:

'Dr. Darts' Newsletter has been one of the inspirational additions to the darting world. Its content I always look forward to and enjoy. Congratulations Patrick, on your achievement. I know you enjoy putting it together, just as much as we all enjoy reading it. May I wish all the readers of Dr. Darts' Newsletter, a wonderful festive season, and may we all be ever thoughtful of others.'



Bob Anderson, 1988 Embassy World Darts Champion and inaugural winner of the League of Legends title wishes

"A Happy Christmas to darts fans everywhere. I hope to see many of you in 2011 on my travels around the UK and beyond."



...and from Steve Beaton, 1996 World Champion and semi-finalist in the 2010 Grand Slam, sends

"Christmas Greetings and a Happy, Healthy and Prosperous 2011 to all my Sponsors, Fans and Friends."



Top Canadian darter Bob Sinnaeve, who successfully returned to the darts scene during 2010, has this message to fans and friends 'across the pond':

"Best Wishes for the Holiday Season from my family and me to all our old friends and the many new ones we have made during the past year."



And 'Bobby Dazzler' himself, Bobby George says:

"Merry Christmas and enjoy your trebles and most importantly your doubles!"



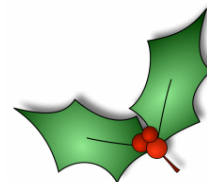
And finally here's a very special message from Jamie Harvey:

'Hi Everybody, 'Bravedart' here. I'm a very lucky man to still be here thanks to my wife Marie, my son Steven and my daughter Angela and especially Dr. White who saved my life. To all my family and friends and especially all my 2,000 friends on Facebook who have kept my will to survive this terrible illness CANCER, I, Jamie 'Bravedart' Harvey, from the bottom of my heart wish every last one of you a very Merry Christmas and the best new year ever. Merry Christmas my friends. Thanks to all of you. Lol xxx'



What can I add? But my sincere wishes to you all for your interest and support over the past year. Before I go please let me share a memory of my days back in Blue Boar Darts Club, circa 1980s... Here's a festive carton I drew for a Christmas issue of *Out of the Blue – The Official Bullsheets of the BBMDc*.

I was so much older then...

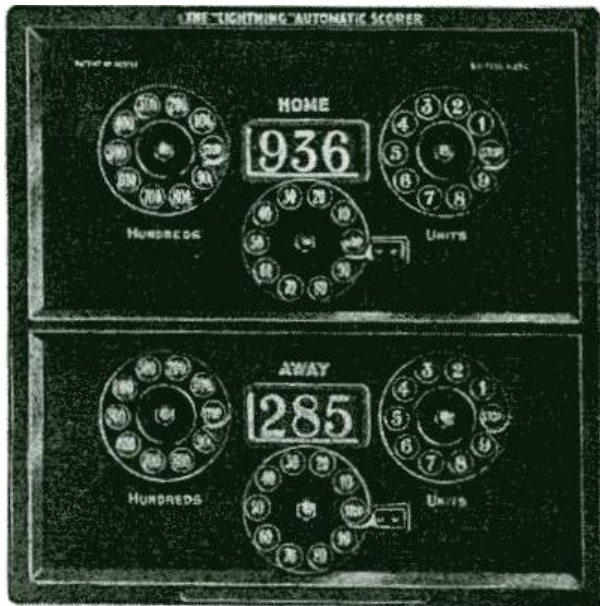


COMING UP IN ISSUE ELEVEN...

Issue 11 will be sent out to subscribers in early **February** 2011. I will be taking a much-needed rest during January probably just sitting in front of the TV watching the world championships with a beer in one hand, the remote in the other with my best girl by my side.

What I can promise in Issue 11 is to bring you up to date with the news about the book Bobby George and I have been writing together *Scoring for Show: Doubles for Dough*.

The article I promised back in Issue 7 about the Lightning Darts Scorer (pictured) *will* be included plus loads of other news and articles which you'll never find anywhere else but in *DDN*. I will also be reviewing a brand new darts book titled *Darts Miscellany*.



AND DON'T FORGET...

Signed copies of my book are available to subscribers in the UK for an all inclusive price of **SIX POUNDS** sterling.

Happy Holidays

Cheers!

Patrick

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