

DR. DARTS' NEWSLETTER

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INDIA DARTS QUALIFIER HEADS FOR THE ALLY PALLY FOR THE FIRST TIME IN OVER A DECADE

Back in 2007 I was proud to be able to give the PDC contact details of the National Darts Champion OF India at that time, Ashfaque Sayed, who was subsequently invited to attend the PDC world championship finals at the Alexandra Palace.



My attendance there to watch Ashfaque play in the preliminary round of that championship was facilitated by the late, lamented Tommy Cox. As a result I was able to meet Ashfaque and to watch him play. (The photo, left, shows Ashfaque and me meeting for the first time at Ally Pally. (Photo © Hermanpax 2007. Used with permission.))

As a direct result he and I have stayed in contact with each other ever since. Until now, Ashfaque has remained the only darts player from India to play in the PDC World Championship finals.

However, all that has now changed. Ashfaque e-mailed me recently saying

"After eleven years a proud Indian will again represent his country in this year's PDC World Championship. The PDC India qualifier hosting was awarded to Mr Shreyans Goyal, CEO of Professional Darts India who decided to host it in my city Pune on 28th October 2018.

My team and I gladly accepted the honour. Within 45 days we worked on it and executed it to our delight. We had 95% of the top India darters participating, 48 in all in spite of age cap of over 16s only, some festivals and exam timings during this period. The enthusiastic players came in from all regions countrywide. This historic event has given a fillip to the game and we expect the levels to rise exponentially.

The proud winner was Nitin Kumar (pictured on page 2 with Ashfaque), based in Kolkata, West Bengal who deserved the spot with his dedication and sacrifice for the game. In the finals he got the better of Ankit Goenka, also from Kolkata, who has been his competitive partner in recent times.

Nitin took him in five straight legs to cement his authority with an average of 88 for three darts which should be the best recorded in any Indian darts finals.

The event venue sponsor was the Orbis Education Society; Mr Haseeb Faquih, a proud Trustee ensured we were able to have the hall and a brilliant stage for semis and finals all set for us; all ably backed by the schools staff.

Since we were to conduct the singles qualifier in one day we also had on the previous day conducted a men's doubles and team event. This helped the players get into the groove and loosen their arms so to speak. The overall event saw a distribution of Rs 130,000 [rupees] in prize money along with trophies and mementos. The chief guest was a first class cricketer from India, Mr Samad Fallah.



We were pleased to receive dartboards from the WINMAU Dartboard Company through their distributors Nishaan Darts India. WINMAU also kindly distributed chain ring sharpeners to all participants. We thank Ian Flack for readily offering us the WINMAU products.

The official t-shirts were supplied free of charge by Head, the famous tennis equipment company through their distributors Durga Sports Mumbai. Lastly Red Bull on both days kept us energetic with their world famous energy drinks.

We in India thank the PDC profusely for bringing back India yet again on the darts world map. We shall be grateful if they set this as a precedent for years to come. This will mean a lot for darts in our Asia region. A separate India qualifier is a boon to the darts lovers in our country."

Ashfaque added

"Patrick, it is a story you started in 2007 when you facilitated a wild card entry for the first Indian darter in the PDC, me, Ashfaque Sayed. History was indeed created. Let's pray a lot more India darters will keep following the path of that history year after year and eventually make their country even prouder."

A 'POSSIBLE'

I have featured darts terminology (or 'lingo') in *DDN* before and, as you all know, I co-authored the book *Scoring for Show. Doubles for Dough* back in 2011 with darts star Bobby George.

One piece of lingo I haven't included to date is 'A possible' which back in the 1930s was another phrase for "180!" For proof I am grateful to the anonymous person who sent me a cutting from the *Bristol Evening News* dated 10th March 1938. The short news report titled 'A Possible at Darts' reads as follows:

Mr. L. Sanger, of the Cyclists Touring Club (Bristol District Association) writes from the Little Paradise, Bedminster:

You may be interested to know that the captain of the Colston Arms darts team, Lodge Street - Mr. R. Capsos by name – scored a possible in a friendly game early in January last, the score of course being 180.

This can be verified if desired by the landlord of that house. Needless to say, this took place on a full-sized board, as this team plays in the Simonds Darts league in Bristol.

OBITUARY – TOMMY COX

It is with personal sadness that I record the passing of a giant of darts Tommy Cox who died on the morning of Wednesday 14th November.



I first met Tommy (pictured, left in later years) back in the early 1990s when the World Darts Council (WDC) was in its infancy; later of course to become the global juggernaut of darts, the Professional Darts Corporation (PDC). It was Tommy who, in late 1993, facilitated my attendance at the very first and, at that time, the ‘unofficial’ Skol World Championships at the Circus Tavern, Purfleet; a low-ceilinged and smoky Essex night club more used to lap-dancing and ‘adult’ comedians than a week at the darts. (Image © Lawrence Lustig/PDC. Used with permission.)

But from that little acorn a mighty darts organisation did grow and I was proud to be there right at the start of the WDC World Championships.

Of course, the WDC had been *years* in the making. You have to go back to the 80s to find the true nucleus of that organisation. Tommy was one of the founding fathers who was to cause a sensation at the Embassy World Championships at Lakeside in January 1993 in the players’ lounge wearing the WDC logo on his jacket. The rare photograph here shows Tommy with his fellow ‘pirate’ Dick Allix and that ‘offending’ logo. (© PC Darts archive)



We all know what happened in the years that followed, a period of unimaginable turmoil; a period of players being banned from all BDO events which ended in court proceedings. But Tommy and others, including Dick Allix, stayed at the helm and drove the WDC/PDC onwards.

The PDC website announced Tommy’s death thus:

It is with sadness that the PDC has learned that co-founder Tommy Cox passed away on Wednesday morning...

A former players' manager, Tommy linked up with Dick Allix and John Markovic alongside 14 stars of the sport to form the World Darts Council (now PDC) in 1993. Tommy took on the role of Tournament Director, a position he held for over 20 years until his retirement in 2015 as he organised the formats and smooth running of PDC events. He was inducted into the PDC Hall of Fame in 2010 alongside Allix, recognising their contribution in the formation and success of the Professional Darts Corporation.

PDC Chairman Barry Hearn said

This is an extremely sad day for all of us at the PDC. Tommy's contribution to our formation can never be under-stated and will never be forgotten.

He was known and respected throughout the sport and I know that he was proud of the worldwide growth of the PDC since he stood shoulder-to-shoulder with Dick [Allix] and the player during darts' split.

I can honestly say that Tommy was one of the primary reasons why I got involved in darts. He encouraged me to get into the sport and it's something I'll never forget.

Although he had retired, Tommy was still involved in darts in recent years and will be sadly missed.

Tributes to Tommy Cox from darts fans and top people in the sport can be seen at the following link

<https://www.pdc.tv/news/2018/11/14/tommy-cox-passes-away>

RIP Tommy.

ODD DARTS

I received the following e-mail from *Darts World* reader Nigel Jones. Nigel, from Lancashire, wrote:

I am a big fan of darts and enjoy reading your column every month in Darts World. I'm also a fan of other sports and enjoy watching American 9-ball pool which got me thinking.

In 9-ball the players use three different cues; one to break off, one to use in normal play and another to play jump shots. I wonder if anyone has used two different sets of darts during a leg. A player might favour a slimmer dart for scoring as there is more room in the treble but a slightly heavier set for finishing as often only one dart is required to win the game.

I can't see it applying to County and pro players as they check out combinations but you never need three darts in the same bed to check out. It got me thinking as several players in my pub team have tried new darts and have said it improves their scoring but preferred their old set when finishing!

I seemed to recall that Welsh darts star and first Embassy World Champion, Leighton Rees (pictured below) used to throw three different darts so checked with his former manager and global darts ambassador Dr. Eddie Norman. He confirmed Leighton (pictured below) had odd



weight darts, 26, 27 and 28 grams adding “He always threw the lightest dart first and the heaviest dart last.” (Image © Ryan Rees. Used with permission.)

In addition Eddie told me that the inaugural World Masters winner Cliff Inglis was the same, throwing three odd darts, 16, 17 and 18 grams, also, like Leighton, always threw the lightest dart first and heaviest last.

There must have been others who threw odd darts. Can you recall any?

And Nigel Jones’ enquiry didn’t end there. He added

Didn't Alan Warriner-Little have two darts the same but another from a different set when he competed at the top level?

I contacted Alan and he told me that throwing odd darts was 'partially true'. Alan said that some years ago

"I played in PDC World Championships v John Lowe in the first round and I realised when I got there I had lost one dart! So I borrowed one off Al Hedman who was in the crowd at the time to use with my other two. I couldn't hit a barn door, so at 0-3 down I used all three of his and won 4-3."



(The image, above left shows Alan and me at the Dart & Cue Exhibition in Manchester in 1989. Image © Hermanpix. Used with permission. (We were so much younger then!))

Of course this all begs the question, “Are there any other top players (locally, nationally or internationally) who throw (or threw) ‘odd darts’?” If you can think of anyone or have a story to tell having witnessed an ‘odd dart’ moment like Alan then, please, drop me a line at patrick.chaplin@btiunternet.com.

This question from Nigel also made me wonder if Peter Wright, who has a reputation of forever tinkering with his darts, has ever considered throwing three different weights. A spokesman for Red Dragon who was good enough to mention this to ‘Snakebite’ told me

“He’s never done it intentionally. In terms of different darts for doubles and trebles he’s tried in practice but would never do it in a serious game.”

Eddie Norman also gave me an interesting footnote:

“Leighton always drove in his car in his house slippers.”

NEWS OF THE WORLD MEDAL – SUPER-SLEUTHING

Subscriber and Darts Collector Chris Lovell contacted me recently about one of his latest purchases. Chris wrote:



I have just purchased an unusual News of the World darts medal. (Pictured left) I have never seen one inscribed 'Sub Area Winner 1937-38'. What was the 'Sub Area' a qualifying round?

The medal reads 'NEWS OF THE WORLD INDIVIDUAL DARTS CHAMPIONSHIP. WORTHING SUB AREA. WINNER 1937-38. The only info I have from the seller is that it came from a relation with the possible surname Knight. They also won The 'H.N.A singles' in 1939. Again no idea on what that was or where. Any Info greatly received. Regards Chris.

I am not always able to provide an answer to questions I receive but in the case of the *News of the World* in particular there is a man I can turn to for assistance if I cannot help. He's never failed me yet and he still hasn't. In response to Chris's query my contact replied:

In the 1937-1938 competition the London & Home Counties final was contested by the winners of various area finals which were based on towns and cities rather than counties. It was only with the 1938-1939 competition that the London & Home Counties final was contested by the winners of county divisional finals. Therefore, the lower level finals leading to the area finals, such as the one in Worthing, would presumably be sub-area finals.

[Among] the list of finalists, [was] an 'F.C. Knight' of the West Tarring Club, the winner of the Brighton area final. [According to the] report of the finals from the News of the World published on July 3, 1938 Knight lost in the first round to F.E. Betts who got to the final, losing to F.A. Wallace.

Chris's response when I sent him the details was

Wow! Many thanks for this information Patrick. Can't believe how quick you sorted that one. I'd have been chasing feathers. Having never seen such a medal before I wasn't sure but the information matches up. Many thanks for your help.

I have passed on Chris's thanks to my contact.

One part of Chris's query remains what does 'H.N.A.' stand for? Perhaps a subscriber from the Worthing area can provide the answer.

APOLOGIES TO BOB

I guess some of you eagle-eyed subscribers will have noticed that I inadvertently dubbed Bob Anderson 'The Rhinestone Cowboy' in last month's *DDN* when, of course, it should have been 'The Limestone Cowboy' a nickname given to him by the late, great Sid Waddell.

FINISHING SCHOOL (OR RATHER UNIVERSITY)

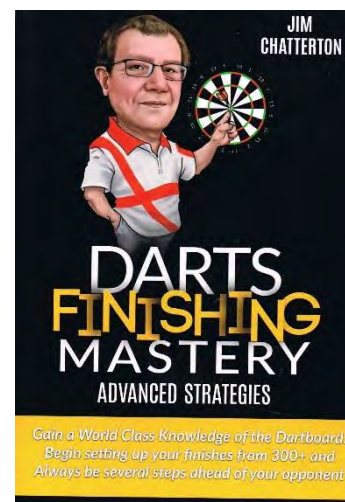
As you all know, I have written and co-authored a few darts books in my time but I have to admit that I have never thought of writing a book purely about *finishing*. Well, Jim Chatterton from North Carolina has. In fact he has written *four* of them!

“Wow!” I hear you say, shriek or shout. Yes, *four*.

A few months ago Jim e-mailed to tell me about his passion for darts. He told me

“I am English, although I currently reside in North Carolina. I have been around the darts scene most of my adult life. I am from Derbyshire, the same county as the great John Lowe.

I was never the best player, reaching super league and county standards, but what I did excel in was the mathematics surrounding the finishing. Everywhere I went I became the go-to person for anything finishing-related. It became even more apparent that my skills were in big demand when I moved to America. I had devised a system that made finishing, along with all its complexities, very easy to master – completely and permanently. My system takes the maths out of the equation, and that is what all players should be striving for.”



The core book in the series is called *Darts Finishing Mastery: How to Master the Art of Finishing* which takes players of all abilities from very humble beginnings right to the complex finishing combinations at the top end. There are strategies for every situation a player might find him/herself in, and contain detailed explanations of different strategies depending on whether they have three or two darts in their hands, as well as taking into account the opponents situation as well.

The other three books followed on concluding with the most complex work *Darts Finishing Mastery: Advanced Strategies* is according to Jim “the only book of its kind available anywhere on earth. It is complex, and not an easy read. It is all about the vital second phase of the 501 game – the setup phase.”

Jim’s books reveals one man’s total dedication to one key aspect of dartsmanship and I have a sense that there’s a book five in production already.

To check out all four books visit <https://dartsfinishing.com/> and to download the two eBooks can be downloaded at the following links:

All about the Bullseye: <https://dl.bookfunnel.com/lmx16m4mp6>

The 7 Pillars of Darts: <https://dl.bookfunnel.com/qig1qii6nj>

If *anyone* faces *any* problems with finishing then all your answers are here in Jim’s books.

AND AS THE FESTIVE SEASON APPROACHES...

If you were a darts player in London or the south and south-east of England in December 1945 what better Christmas present to give your darting friends than a year's subscription to *The Dart* a small, but amazingly informed darts newspaper written and published by a man named Frank Wolfe. For the sum of 17s 6d (seventeen shillings and sixpence) you would receive 51 issues (*The Dart* was never published during Christmas week.). That sum equates to about £40 sterling today.

I was privileged to have met Frank back in the 1980s and proud that he donated a number of back issues of *The Dart* to my archive. (I recall at that time that Frank was amazed that “anyone could be interested in my little newspaper.”) Rest assured Frank that your ‘little newspaper’ reveals more about darts in Britain during the early post-war period than any other, save perhaps the *News of the World*.

AND FINALLY...

Whether you celebrate the festive season or not, I wish each and every reader of *DDN* a very happy, prosperous and productive New Year.

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