

DR DARTS' NEWSLETTER

Issue Fourteen May 2011 www.patrickchaplin.com



www.winmau.com

Dr Darts Newsletter is sponsored by Winmau Dartboard Company

INTRODUCTION

Welcome one and all to Issue 14 of *DDN*.



So what am I doing being photographed with the 2011 Ladbrokes.com World Darts Champion Adrian Lewis? Yes, it's true I played Adrian Lewis. Can you guess who won? (No bets taken.) I tell you more about that fantastic experience further into this issue. (Image: Chris Sargeant)

Once again *DDN* is packed full of darts-related information most of which (and I'm fairly sure of this) you will find nowhere else on the planet. I really should have called Issue 13 'Issue 12A'. It took a long time to get it right and I think it wasn't ready to be published until version seven! (Thanks to my webmaster David King who produces each *DDN* for his infinite patience.)

By the way, I am thrilled to say that amongst my new subscribers are English darts legend Alan Glazier and his wife Kris. (More about Alan in Issue 15.)

I've received loads of positive feedback on #13 including from one of my greatest fans, Dave B., who said, "What a stunner! Just when I think you cannot write a better one you come up with this one." Like everyone else Dave realised immediately that the article about 'Dartus Maximus' was an April Fool. Cyril E. thanked me for 'such enjoyable and interesting newsletters' (more from him later) whilst Steve 'Metalman' called *DDN* #13 'a storming issue' and Vince B. described it as 'Absolutely awesome...'

Finally, for now, apologies to everyone who was expecting the interview with ex-England darts star Tony Brown to appear in this issue. This is being held over and will

now appear in *DDN* #15. However, I hope that you will all enjoy the replacement article about *The Indoor League*.

I hope what I have to offer readers this month will meet your expectations.

Onward Issue 14!

FROM PREVIOUS ISSUES

(a) April Fool

Although the story about 'Dartus Maximus' in Issue 13 probably didn't fool anyone, one of my German subscribers, Charis, enjoyed it so much that she translated it into her native language (with permission of course) and placed it on her website. Here's the link

<http://www.globaldarts.de/globalDartsDE/index.html>

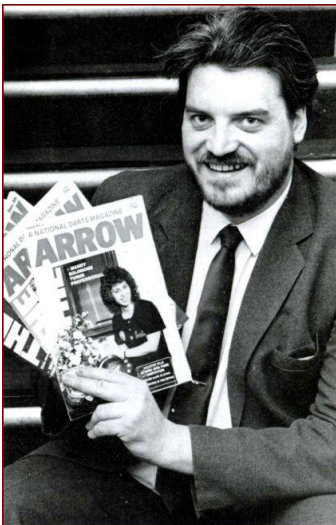
Charis tells me that she is still laughing.

(b) Dolf Darts

Keith and Mike Meyer were thrilled to see their darts-golf game **Dolf** mentioned in the last issue of *DDN* although Keith did point out that that **he** and not Mike is the President of the World Dolf Federation. Sorry guys. By way of apology here's the Dolf link again - www.dolfdarts.com. Keith has also informed me that a Dolf link has been set up at Wikipedia at

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dart_Golf

(c) The Arrow magazine



Back in Issue 12 (March 2011) I mentioned *The Arrow*, a darts magazine published by the National Darts Association of Great Britain (NDAGB) in 1988/89 which run out of steam after only eight issues. Cyril E. had reminded me of the magazine when he asked me to value his collection of six issues. I estimated about £40-£70. Cyril has been kind enough to tell me that he has now sold them on the internet auction site e bay for £40 (including postage and packing); so the bottom of my estimate. Someone's bought a bargain there!

The image shows *The Arrow* editor Peter Degnan with the first three issues of the magazine.
(Image © 1988 Leicester Trader)

(d) The Official Bar Guide to Darts



I never miss an opportunity to mention my 2010 publication *The Official Bar Guide to Darts* and this issue is no exception. I am grateful to 'Mastercaller', the Netherlands' Jacques Nieuwlaat for his encouraging review which is featured on his website www.rtl7darts.nl. Jacques told me, Go to 'Nieuws' and you'll find it then click 'Translate' for the English version. Thanks Jacques.

(e) Tom Barrett (1) – Exhibition throwing



Originally mentioned in Issue 12 a follow-up piece in Issue 13 questioned whether or not the late great Tom Barrett had in fact thrown 'household drawing pins' as part of his darts exhibition tricks. I went back to Mick S who had witnessed the event and asked him for clarification. Here's what Mick had to say:

'I saw Tom throw household drawing pins in an exhibition with Bill Duddy at Camber Sands holiday camp way back in the 70s; about 1975 or 1976. Tom hit a 140 with three of the pins. He held each drawing pin between his thumb and either his index or middle finger. The point was

aiming at his hand and the cap of the pin was touching the tip of his fingers. As he threw the pin he sort of spun it. I know it sounds far-fetched but at that time he and Bill were doing the rounds so I can't be the only person to remember this surely!'

Does anyone else recall that particular amazing exhibition feat? If so, please contact me via my website www.patrickchaplin.com with all the facts.

I do not have an image of Tom playing at Camber Sands so I've included one where he's playing darts on the beach somewhere in Spain with British professional boxer Joe Bugner. (© Rex Features, undated, DWPC Archive)

(f) Tom Barrett (2) – TV Footage

Henry L from Newport, South Wales dropped me a note and asked "Do you know of any old TV footage showing the great dart player Tom Barrett playing darts?" Unfortunately I could only partly answer Henry's question. Here's my reply:

“I do not know of any DVDs that contain Tom’s image and I think TV came to the *News of the World* in the early 1970s when Tom wasn’t entering it anymore. He did appear on *The Johnny Carson Show* in America in 1968.

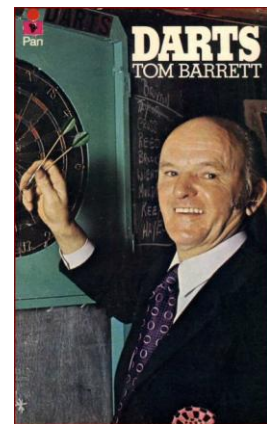


Tom also threw darts in an episode of TV series *The Saint* called ‘Fast Women’. He was out of shot; the darts appearing to have been thrown by a nasty gangster-type character with an atrocious German accent. As far as feature films are concerned, Tom threw darts in the title sequence of the Beatles’ film *Help* but again was out of shot. (Apparently he had to throw darts at an image of Ringo’s right eye, mouth, etc.)”

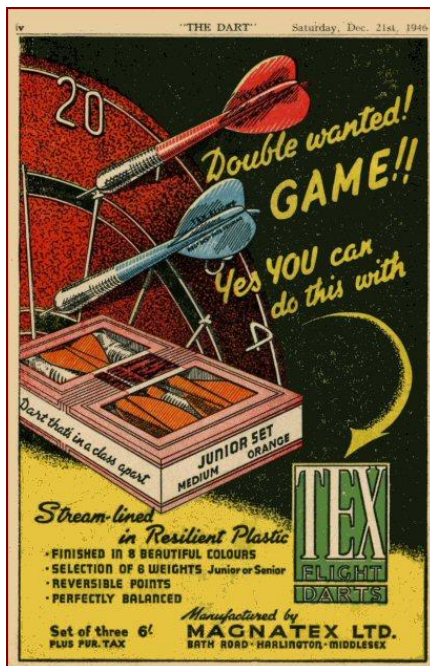


(This information is extracted from Tom’s book *Darts* (London: Pan Books, 1973, pages 60-62.) the cover of which is pictured here.)

So, as far as I am aware, unlike other greats such as Jim Pike and Joe Hitchcock, no footage of Tom Barrett appears to exist...unless of course someone can prove me wrong!



(g) Unicorn Diver Darts



When writing to me about Tom Barrett, Mick S also mentioned the Unicorn Diver Darts which were featured on pages 14-15 of *DDN* #13 and told me that he used to have a set of chrome-plated brass darts “where you took the plastic flight out and the point fitted inside the [hollow all-plastic stem and] flight then you screwed the barrel back into the dart.”

Most likely what Mick had there was a set of ‘Tex Flight Darts’ which were introduced in the mid-1940s by a company called Magnatex Ltd., which was based in Harlington, Middlesex. The advertisement shown here (which is taken from *The Dart* newspaper, issue dated Saturday 21st December 1946) shows the integral flight and stem and refers to ‘reversible points’; the purpose of which was so that darts players could carry their darts in their pocket without causing any damage to their clothes or their person.

If anyone else has similar darts in their collection why not send me some information and I’ll include it in a future issue of *DDN*?

(h) Crowd Noise

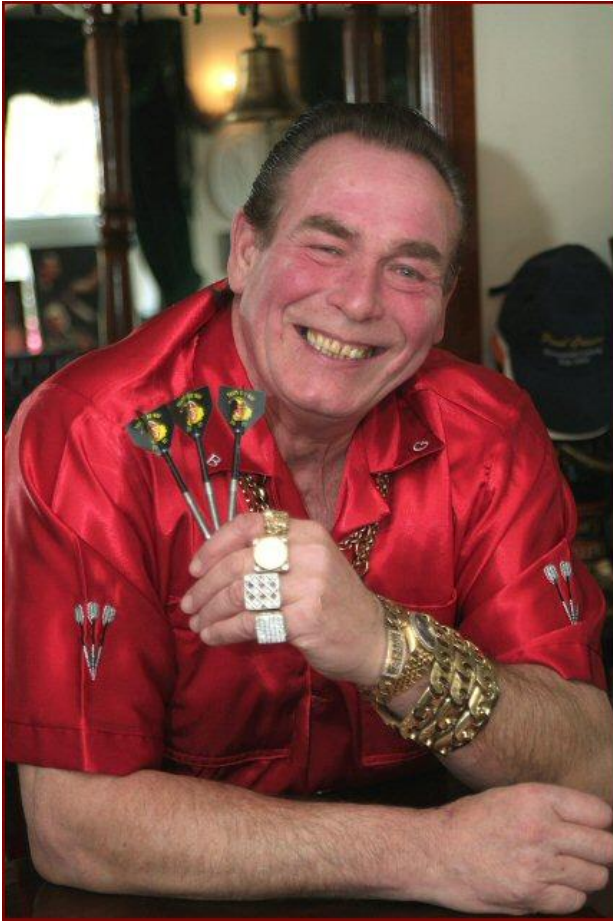
Arthur from Dublin has added to the feedback on crowd noise, a matter which has featured in several issues of *DDN*. Arthur was at the Alexandra Palace on Saturday 30th April 1977 for the Grand Finals of the 1976/77 *News of the World* Darts Championship. He told me that during the semi-final between John Lowe and Kent's Mick Norris the crowd was 'very bad.' Arthur said, "I was sitting on the very large cement steps at the very back of the hall with a couple of friends and had an elevated view of everything." Elements of the crowd became unruly.

Dozens of so-called fans began shouting then picking up their fold-up chairs and throwing them across the hall. It was difficult at first for Arthur to see whose fans they were. He later recalled, "Even from our position at the back of the hall we were shocked and slightly intimidated. We had never seen anything like this in darts in Ireland. The shouting continued until Norris beat Lowe 2-0. Norris then went into the final against Bob Crossland and beat the Yorkshire Divisional Champion also 2-0. Norris' fans invaded the stage to celebrate their champion's victory.

I cannot recall chair throwing at any other major event; shouting and throwing beer cans yes, but not the hurling of furniture. I do not have a photo of the chair thrusters so reproduce here an image of Mick sitting on top of the world (well actually on top of the Ally Pally) after winning the coveted *News of the World* crown. (Copyright holder unknown. Image courtesy of DWPC Archive) It's not a bad photograph considering that this was produced long before the arrival of computer trickery.



(i) Scoring for Show, Doubles for Dough



It'll soon be time for the publication of Bobby George's and my book *Scoring for show, doubles for dough* which will hit the bookshelves in the UK on Saturday 25th June. Bobby, his wife Marie and I have seen the book in its final form and we're very pleased with it and hope the fans will be too. Bobby and I had such fun writing the book and in fact there are parts of the book that, despite having read it over and over during the proof stage, still make us laugh out loud.

The promotional 'blurb' tells fans that, 'This informative and fun reference book will provide hours of pleasure, making it a 'must have' for fans of the game and anyone interested in finding out more about the light-hearted and humorous side of darts.' Eric Bristow MBE has already commented, "Bobby's language has always been a bit colourful. Now here's the proof!" Our publisher is very pleased too and

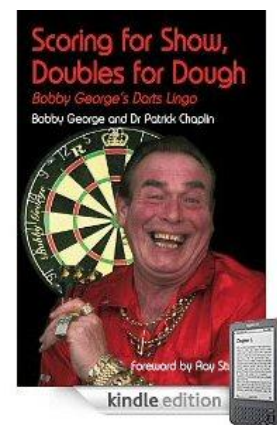
says we have a winner on our hands but of course that's up to you the fans. The book will be published in hardback and will cost £9.99 (not £12.99 as reported in an earlier *DDN*). Advance orders can be placed via www.apexpublishing.co.uk or Amazon.

The great news for fans of e-books is that you can purchase *Scoring for show, doubles for dough* right NOW from Amazon.co.uk. This version sells at the slightly cheaper price of £6.89.

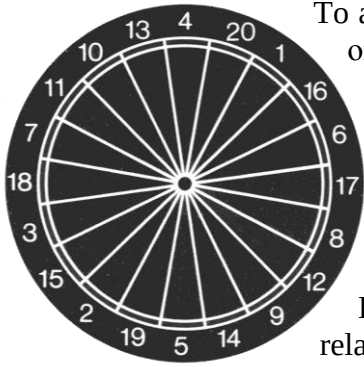
The link is as follows:

http://www.amazon.co.uk/Scoring-Show-Doubles-Dough/dp/B004VN39WS/ref=sr_1_2?ie=UTF8&qid=1302706197&sr=1-2

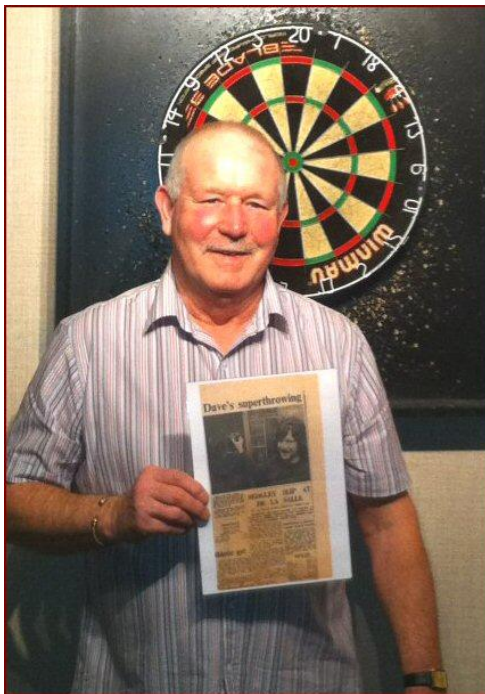
(Images of Bobby by Wendy Balic. Image © 2011 Bobby George and Patrick Chaplin)



(j) The Manchester Log-End Board – Dave’s record



To answer the question posed in Issue 13 (page 16) about whether or not Dave Francis’ record of an 11-dart game of 301, straight in, straight finish on the log-end board, I contacted John Gwynne. Many of you will know John as a commentator and pundit on SKY TV’s coverage of PDC darts tournaments and the Premier League. However, what some of you may not know is that John is also a very well-respected sports journalist *and* the Secretary of the Manchester Federation of Log-End Leagues and the fount of all knowledge on matters relating to the Manchester Board.



Although was not able to say that Dave’s record (130, 60, 80, single 13, single 18) had ever been equalled or bettered, it was to the best of his knowledge the best ever *recorded* leg of 301 in that format. John told me, “Dave’s were exceptional darts on the log-end board and represents a challenge to others.” So we may well be seeing Manchester log-enders trying to beat Dave’s record in the future.

John also confirmed that the ‘straight in, straight out’ format was still played in some men’s leagues in the Manchester area and in the majority of the ladies log-end leagues. (There will be more about ‘slip-up’ in a future issue of *DDN*.)



The cartoon of John featured here rushing to meet yet another deadline comes from my personal image archive (the DWPC Archive). The original artist is not known.

THE ROYAL WEDDING

Prince William and Kate Middleton have of course been the focus of the world’s attention for months; all that attention culminating in the Royal Wedding at Westminster Abbey on Friday 28th April. A Bank Holiday was declared here in the UK but that didn’t apply to me (a self-employed scribe) as I sat at my desk completing *DDN* #14.

But what has this to do with darts?



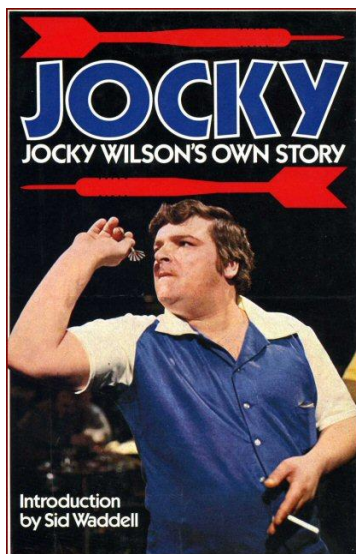
Well, as you may know, BDO Lakeside World Champions Martin Adams and Trina Gulliver have sent the happy couple a wedding present of the darts they used to win their respective world championships earlier this year. (If you didn't know, then see the latest issue of *Darts World* for details.) As a gesture to the newlyweds from two of the very best players in the world that's fine with me.

However, although I recall somewhere that William has played darts 'occasionally' I cannot remember either His Royal Highness or his bride ever enthusing about our sport. It was Prince Harry who attended the PDC World Championship this year, not William. He certainly seemed to be getting into the spirit of the game but William? Not sure.

Nice thought though.

SILLY BOOK PRICES

Debbie D from Scotland contacted me a few weeks ago asking if I had a copy of *Jocky - Jocky Wilson's Story* in stock at the moment. Sadly I was unable to help her so I checked one of the main second-hand bookshop websites.



The original price of the book when first published in London in 1983 by Arthur was £6.50 but the asking price of the one copy I found on the 'net was (Wait for it!) a massive £95.75 (plus £2.50 postage and packing)! I appreciate that this is a rare volume but to charge nearly £100 is [Expletive deleted] disgraceful. Dealers don't even charge anything near that for first editions of Rupert Croft-Cooke's book *Darts* (1936).

One book you will always find sensibly priced is *Leighton Rees on Darts* which was edited by Dave Lanning and published in London by Cassell in 1979. I mention this book

solely as an excuse to reproduce here an image of the late, great Leighton Rees (taken in September 1979) which shows him playing darts whilst the rest of the Wales national team (well most of them) are absorbed with his book. (Image: Copyright unknown, courtesy of DWPC Archive)



As you may be aware, I do have a **DARTS BOOKSHOP** on my website so if there are any books you are looking for I might just be able to help. Check out

www.patrickchaplin.com/Bookswantedandforsale.htm

THE INDOOR LEAGUE

For the first time in *DDN* I am going to diversify (just a little) and take a look at a unique television series that featured not only darts but also other English pub games.



Three Indoor League games; shove ha'penny, darts (Alan Evans) and bar billiards

This special article is all about *The Indoor League*, a ground-breaking British television series launched by Yorkshire TV (YTV) in the early 1970s. The series featured a number of popular English pub games including darts and was, as one writer has observed ‘Sid Waddell’s early venture into darts broadcasting.’



For hundreds of years indoor pub games had existed peacefully (and sometimes not so peacefully) in the smoked-filled public bars, vaults and tap rooms of thousands of ordinary pubs across Britain. Depending on where you lived the bar would resound to the clatter of falling table skittles, the rattle of the ‘bones’ (dominoes) being shuffled, the gentle thud-thud-thud as three darts hit their target or the indescribable banshee-like shriek as someone accidentally toppled the black mushroom and lost their entire score at the end of a game of bar billiards.

Most matches were friendly and never made the headlines. Only the more serious organised pub leagues made the weekly local newspapers and then usually in the form of league tables and results with no detailed reports. Players of pub games had never really bothered about the profile of their recreations. They were more concerned about the friendship and sociability for which such games are rightly renowned. Then came the team from Yorkshire TV (which included Sid Waddell) who produced *The Indoor League* and for a few years the world of public house games was exposed to the television public like never before.

The Indoor League was mapped out ‘in a posh office at Yorkshire Television’ in Kirkstall Road, Leeds in May 1972, the meeting ending with an agreed format and an empty crate of ‘Double Diamond’. In that meeting attended by Sid was Donald Baverstock, the Programme Controller for YTV, the man who had come up with the original concept, of pitching pub and club champions against each other in various pub game disciplines. He also came up with the title whilst watching his father become worked up over a game of table skittles.

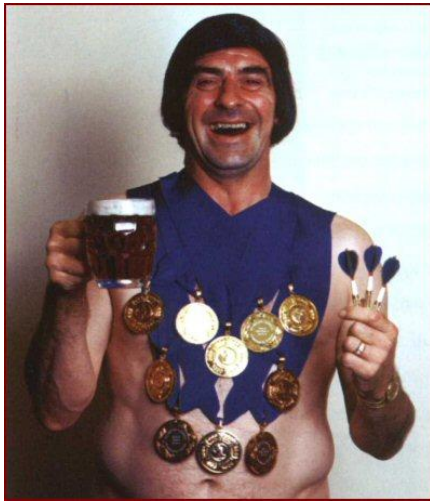
Also present was Peter Jones who was to become the producer of the *Indoor League*. At the meeting he chipped in that darts had long been neglected on TV. This was not strictly true as Westward TV had been running a darts tournament since the early 1960s and ITV had first covered the *News of the World* darts championship in 1972 but apart from that...

Nearly three decades earlier the first pub games broadcast on BBC Television were darts and shove ha’penny. At 9.25 p.m. on Saturday 29th May 1937 BBC ‘London Television’ broadcast from Alexandra Palace a programme cleverly entitled ‘Darts and Shove Ha’penny’; a competition ‘between two rival teams of two well-known [*but not identified*] hostelries.’ Much later, in March 1968, BBC ‘Channel 1’ began a new weekly series entitled ‘Quiz Time Gentlemen Please!’ where ‘Pubs compete with darts and general knowledge’; a forerunner of the TV quiz show *Bull’s-eye* (hosted by Jim Bowen) which was broadcast by ITV in 1981 and then Central TV from 1982 to 1995.

But back to that meeting...

John Fairley, head of local features, who regularly played skittles and shove ha'penny, also attended and shortly afterwards became the executive producer of *The Indoor League*. Then there was Sid, at that time the reigning all-Yorkshire shove ha'penny champion, who had served his apprenticeship at the sport in the 'red-hot Durham City Super League' and who had been involved with television since the late 1960s.

Sid and Peter Jones waxed lyrical and reported excitedly about the *News of the World* Individual Darts Championship and the special atmosphere and 'fan mania' at the Grand Finals (at that time held at the Alexandra Palace, London). The *News of the World* tournament had been running since 1927 and once it became 'national' after the end of the Second World War was the one major sports trophy that the ordinary workingman pub-goer could win, potentially starting out in his local boozer and ending up at the Alexandra Palace. Could this 'mania' be transferred to the studio in support of not only darts but other pub games too?



TV Host Freddie Trueman

Once the format had been agreed a number of researchers were dispatched across Yorkshire, Lincolnshire and Durham scouring those counties for champions of arm wrestling, table football, shove ha'penny, darts (both men and women), cheese skittles, table skittles, bar billiards and American 8-ball pool. Cricket legend Freddie Trueman (with pipe and pint) was drafted in to front the show and Richard Whitely (late of TV word game *Countdown* fame) was one of the presenters whilst Dave Lanning (who only recently retired from sharing a darts commentary box on SKY TV with Sid) was one of the commentators.

The first series was recorded at the Queen's Hall, Leeds in mid-October 1972 and the audience response was better than the producers had hoped for. Among the darts players were Charlie Ellis, who had a private darts room in his pub at Wyke, near Bradford, and Colin Minton, from Easingwold, who had played darts since he was four; standing on a bar stool in his father's pub so he could reach the dartboard. Shove ha'penny stars included 'Buffalo Bill' from Scunthorpe (in full cowboy dress; six-gun in one hand, polished brass ha'pennies in the other) whilst Taffy John, a headmaster from near Pontefract, taught his opponents how to play bar billiards with consummate ease that defied description.

In the spring of 1973 Series One of the *Indoor League* was transmitted in the North of England only and was well-received. A second series was assured and the recording for that series was undertaken at the Leeds Irish Centre. With that series the programme went 'national'; one of the major changes being that the traditional Yorkshire (no trebles) dartboard used in the first series was replaced by the more common and nationally recognised London Trebles board.

At its height viewing figures for the *Indoor League* reached five million. It lasted for six series; the last being in 1977 having in its final years evolved into a darts-only show. The programme effectively launched the TV darts commentating careers of both Sid Waddell and Dave Lanning but, above all, the programme, however briefly, raised the profile of pub games across the nation.

But whilst darts went on from strength to strength afterwards to become a ‘monster’ in terms of TV exposure and national and international popularity (It was eventually declared a sport by the various Sports Councils in Britain in 2005) the rest of the pub games featured in *The Indoor League* quickly and quietly returned to the public bar rarely to be seen on television again. From the start dominoes didn’t even get a look in. (Perhaps the producers were concerned about potential problems with crowd control!)



The bar billiards competition is underway

In the television programme *100 TV Moments from Hell* (originally broadcast in the UK by Channel 4 in 2000) Sid Waddell described *The Indoor League*, which was at number 84 in that top 100, as ‘low-brow, red-neck entertainment’ and in his book *Bellies and Bullseyes* (2007) said that it was a ‘brash, raucous show...our tribute to the unsung heroes, male and female, of shove ha’penny, table football, bar skittles, arm-wrestling, bar billiards and darts.’ Quite so...

...and it worked.

Of Sid, well, he is still very active in both darts and pool, playing the latter in his local pub every Friday evening as his schedule allows with (spookily) one of my former PhD external examiners. In that same *100 TV Moments from Hell* programme Sid, clearly in a reference to *The Indoor League*, declared, “I’d love to be remembered as the first man to put shove ha’penny on the television.” (Sorry Sid. See above.)

Some might argue that *The Indoor League* was pub games' finest hour. Close. But I think not. That occurred on 4th August 2009 when English Heritage published Arthur R. Taylor's book *Played at the Pub*.

DR. DARTS TAKES ON THE PDC WORLD CHAMP



Yes, it's true. On 28th March 2011 I took on Adrian Lewis (Yes, *the* Adrian Lewis, the 2011 PDC World Champion) at a charity darts exhibition held in Chelmsford, Essex at a branch of Travis Perkins, Builders Merchants. It was a single game of 501 and I was trounced. I was never in it. If Wayne Baker had been there reporting for *Darts World* he would have summed the match up in four words, "It was a debacle." (But he wasn't so only you and I know

about it.) (Image: Chris Sargeant)

Russ Bray was referee and Keith Deller, 1983 World Champ and Adrian's manager, was also in attendance. Russ gave me such a fantastic introduction that I lost what little nerve or darting skills I had and was ruthlessly dealt with by the world champion but all for a great cause, Breast Cancer. Thanks for the experience Adrian and it was a pleasure to meet you.



That means that I have now been trounced on the dartboard by *three* world champions namely Adrian, Eric Bristow and Trina Gulliver, not forgetting my *A Leg with Bobby* at the Lakeside in January 2007 which I lost too.

I think I'll stick to writing about darts rather than playing it.

EL PASO – LET'S BRING BACK REAL DARTS

I recently received an e-mail (more a plea really) from Cathy who lives in the USA. She wrote:

"I played in a dart league many years ago in El Paso, Texas. Fast forward 30 years. All the dartboards in the entire city are electronic. What happened? Is it just a money matter for the bar because it costs \$1 per game per person? What happened really?"

Cathy raised an interesting point. Thirty years ago steel-tip darts was thriving in many parts of the the USA but then cometh the soft-tip/electronic revolution.

I told Cathy that I believed after darts began to fade over here in the UK in the mid-to-late 1980s with participation levels quickly dropping, the same happened over in the USA but to greater effect.

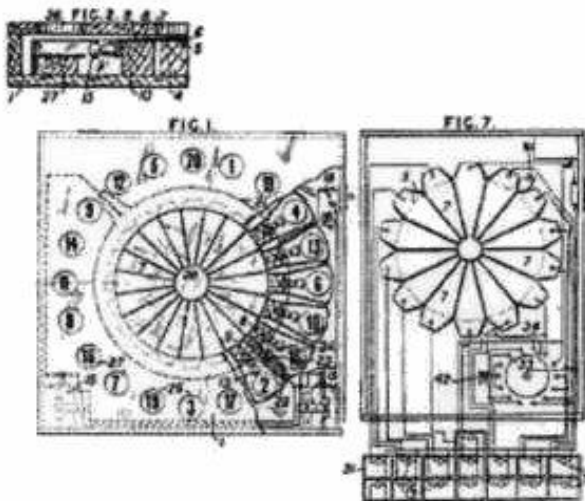
The renaissance in darts in the US (if one can actual call it that) was about soft-tip whereas in the UK the electronic game was never an option. There was never any way that British darters would accept OUR traditional pub game being messed about with and we certainly would never pay to play darts. Several international soft-tip companies have tried to import electronic darts into the UK but we've resisted them every time. Check that. All have failed miserably.

Some British darters believe that electronic darts is just the Americans messing around with another of our sports (like they turned our rounders into baseball and our rugby into American football) then trying to hand it back to us with little success. I tend to see it more as developmental; trying to improve on the original but not always succeeding.

Darts is embedded in the British culture in its original steel-tip form whereas in the US innovative companies such as Arachnid led the way in promoting the electronic game where (as Cathy rightly surmised) US darters are prepared to pay to play. Maybe they are also fascinated by the technology in the same way the Japanese darters are. Japan is another country overwhelmed with the soft-tip game with only occasional pockets of steel-tip.

In a recent issue of *Bull's-Eye News (BEN)* magazine (the US and Canada's biggest-selling darts magazine) Dick Allix from the Professional Darts Corporation was decrying the fact that the PDC had tried hard to bring top steel-tip darts tournaments to the USA but that top American darts players and professionals just would not (or maybe could not because of the cost) support them. Thus I believe only one PDC tournament now survives in North America and that's a tournament in Canada.

However, by looking at any issue of *BEN* and readers will see a great number of soft-tip/electronic tournaments (with substantial prize money) that are on offer throughout the year. This to me is an indicator of where US darts is going. It's soft-tip/electronic all the way.



That makes me just a little sad but that's not to say that there are no steel-tip games to be had in the USA or even in El Paso. In some cities and towns steel tip darts and a bristle dartboard are harder to find than hen's teeth but they do (they *must*) exist. So c'mon El Paso surely you must have steel-tip darts *somewhere*!

The only solace British steel-tip darters can take from all this is that it was a couple of Englishmen (Maurice Ernest Elliott and Baden Donald Warne) who patented the first electronic self-scoring dartboard in the 1930s. (The image shows an extract from the original patent dated 26th November 1934.)

CYPRUS – CHILLY’S OPEN

My good friends in Pafos, Cyprus, Vic Hemming and Terry McGovern told me a while back that they had been asked by Chilly’s Frozen Foods to organise an Open darts competition in nearby Coral Bay.

However, Vic has now informed me that due to a chance of circumstances the Chilly’s Open will now take place at the Ambassador Restaurant 14th-16th May in Pafos. Vic told me, “The prize fund will be guaranteed 6,000 euro and we hope to attract in excess of 200 players for the Men’s event and 50 for the ladies’ so we should also have about 100 doubles. Even the Mayor of Pafos has become involved as he can see the amount that the darts contributes to the local economy.”

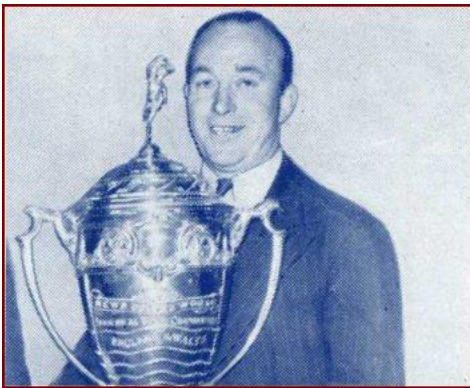
The great news for darters in Pafos and surrounds is that John Lowe, Eric Bristow and commentator and darts journalist John Gwynne will also be attending the event.

So, if you’re on holiday in Pafos around 14th-16th of this month go along to the Ambassador Restaurant and support the local darters.

QUIZ MACHINES

I’m not a great lover of electronic quiz machines but I tried on in my local pub a couple of weeks ago with some friends. It was general knowledge true or false. We gathered around and the questions began...

After a couple of rounds a darts question came up. ‘Jackie Boyce won the *News of the World* Darts Championship in 1948 – True or false’. I instantly pressed ‘True’ but at that very moment knew I was WRONG!



I should have pressed ‘FALSE’ because I *know* that Harry Leadbetter won the inaugural *News of the World* in 1948 when the competition returned after the Second World War. That is Harry’s claim to fame. Needless to say I was heckled by my friends as the words ‘GAME OVER’ filled the screen. (I blamed too many pints of Everard’s Tiger Bitter but no one bought that.)

Jackie Boyce (pictured), the Divisional Champion of London and the Home Counties and the man who took over the Captaincy of the St. Dunstan’s Four when Joe Hitchcock left, won the prestigious *News of the World* Individual Darts Championship in 1949 but how many general quizzers would have known that?

Is that *general* knowledge? (True or False?) Most would simply have had to guess.

SPONSORS NEWS

My sponsor WINMAU and its Swedish distributor Dart Experten announced recently that they will sponsor the Swedish Darts Federation (SDF) from next season.

Winmau's Sales and Marketing Director, Ian Flack, said

"For the first time the Winmau brand exclusively partner the SDF, and the World famous Winmau Blade 4 will become the dartboard of choice of the SDF.

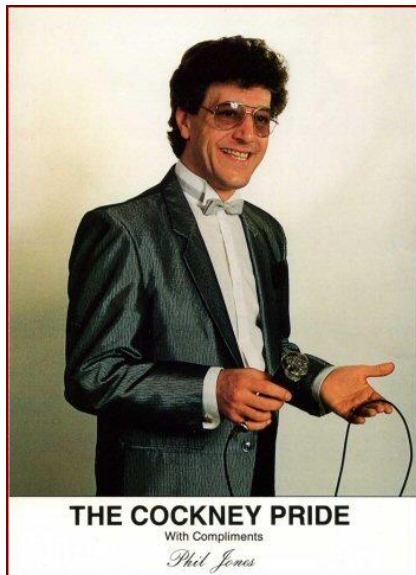
We are delighted that the SDF have chosen our proposal in the face of several courting parties. Anyone who's experienced Winmau products will know we have the highest attention to detail for our tournament approved dartboards, which will greatly benefit the players in Sweden. Our Swedish partner, Dart Experten, was instrumental in the negotiations and we thank them for all their help and support".

Winmau and the SDF will work closely together for the next five years to promote the game of darts right across the growing Swedish Market. Winmau will cross-promote all Swedish news via its web marketing and digital marketing channels.

For further details of the Winmau range visit www.winmau.com

AND FINALLY...

RUMOURS OF MY DEATH...



On the morning of 1st April this year I awoke to read an e-mail from a top professional darts player asking if I had seen notice of famous MC Phil Jones' death on a particular website. I found the website and saw the announcement but could not believe it so delved deeper.

I contacted Dave Allen at the PDC and he quashed the reports by telling me that, after hearing of the announcement, a senior member of the PDC had phoned Phil and reported back that "Phil is fine. He is alive and gambling in a Las Vegas casino!" So was the announcement a genuine error or a rather sick April Fools joke? Perhaps we'll never know.

Phil, pictured here in his younger days, has been a darts player, reporter and MC for many years, and the MC for the PDC for 13 years. He retired in 2007 to go and live in Las Vegas. I wonder if, when he found out about this he said to his many friends, "Rumours of my death have been greatly exaggerated."

COMING UP IN ISSUE 15

The next issue of *DDN* will include

- The exclusive interview with ex-England International Tony Brown I promised last month.
- So you're a belopterophilist! – A look at dart flight collecting
- The 1938 Dunlop promotional dartboard
- Alan Glazier's 17-dart 1,001
- PLUS SO MUCH MORE!

See you next time!

Patrick

Text © 2011 Patrick Chaplin

Images © 2011 Patrick Chaplin or as sourced

Neither text nor images can be reproduced without prior permission of the copyright holder(s).