

DR DARTS' NEWSLETTER

ISSUE

16

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INTRODUCTION

I apologise that this July 2011 issue of *DDN* is much later than planned and thanks to Dave B. for contacting me to ask if everything was fine back here at the ranch. The fact is that it's been a very hectic few weeks in my non-darts life which has left little time for preparing Issue 16 but here it is at last.

Bobby George and I have been on the book-signing trail recently and it has been great meeting the public and especially seeing Bobby's fans queuing up to have their books signed or just to obtain his autograph or have a picture taken. The image shows Bobby with a lady who confessed to being his 'Number One fan'. I'll be joining Bobby for a couple more of the remaining signings over the next week or so. It's been a great experience for me.



Reviews are coming in thick and fast and many local and provincial newspapers up and down the UK have featured Bobby and our book. For a sight of a good number of these, which in the main are very positive indeed, go to www.apexpublishing.co.uk, click on Bobby's book and then click on 'Newspapers and reviews'.

Welcome to Issue 16...

Here we go...

FROM PREVIOUS ISSUES

(a) Jim Pike and Tom Barrett

Individual Darts Championship			
London and Home Counties Division			
Middlesex Area Finals			
Tonight's Matches			
The eight competitors who have qualified to take part in the finals are:-			
1. T. Barrett, F. Spiller & Sons Ltd., Isleworth	5. B. Howell, London Fire Brigade "G Division" Wembley		
2. A. Everett, G.P.O. Sports & Social Club, Enfield	6. D. Maskell, Six Bells, West Drayton		
3. C. Ellix, Service Club, Mill Hill	7. R. Stouchbury, The Three Pigeons, Ealing		
4. E. Gow, Eastcote Arms, South Harrow	8. R. Vince, The Beehive, Southall		
PLAYERS		WINNER	GAMES SCORE
13th R. VINCE	✓ T. BARRETT	R. VINCE	2-1
J. GOW	✓ T. BARRETT	J. GOW	2-0
13th R. STOUCHBURY	✓ D. MASKELL	D. MASKELL	2-0
B. HOWELL	✓ C. ELLIX	D. HOWELL	2-1
SEMI-FINALS			
13th R. VINCE	✓ J. GOW	R. VINCE	2-0
D. MASKELL	✓ B. HOWELL	D. HOWELL	2-1
FINAL			
13th R. VINCE	✓ B. HOWELL	B. HOWELL	2-1

These two top darters of the past have stimulated a good deal of discussion and comment in recent issues of *DDN* and they just keep on comin'.

Brian S and his wife Jan dropped me a line not only to say "We both really enjoy your newsletters" but also to give me some memories of Brian's that sprang to mind after reading the recent *DDN* articles about Jim and Tom.

Brian said, "The *Newsletter* that showed the late Jim Pike throwing darts was very interesting as his darts were the first set of darts I ever bought. In fact they were Pike/Newstead darts." Coincidentally my first set of darts was Leo Newstead 'name' darts too. (More about Leo below.) Brian added, "Jan

and I went to a *News of the World* area final at Harrow Borough Football Club. I guess in the late 70's. Tom Barrett was playing but lost. Rolly Vince lost in the final to a fireman Barry (?), 1-2. The main thing was that Leo Newstead was in the audience and was introduced and took a bow. He must have been quite old. I presume he came to watch Tom Barrett play."

The reason Brian said, "You probably have the programme" is because he actually gave it to me a few years ago. Indeed I am indebted to both Brian and Jan for the books and programmes they donated to my archive.

Because of their generosity I am able to confirm that the match in question, the *News of the World* Middlesex Area final took place on 22nd February 1977 at the football club and that Tom Barrett (F. Spiller & Sons Ltd) was knocked out in the first round 2-0 by J. Gow who was playing out of the *Eastcote Arms*, South Harrow. Incredibly Brian recorded the scores of all the matches so I can confirm that Gow was by far the better player on the night hitting four tons over the two matches whilst Tom hit 100+ on only one occasion. (See image of that Middlesex Area 1977 programme.)

Brian's notes show that Gow went out in the semi-finals to Rolly Vince (playing out of *The Beehive*, Southall) 2-0. As Brian recalled Vince was then beaten in the final by 'Barry (?)', being Barry Howell, the representative of the London Fire Brigade, "G" Division, Wembley, the score being 2-1.

Rolly Vince seems to have been a local star as his name appears in the Middlesex Area finals on a number of occasions. In one of those (1971) he won the area title and proceeded to the London and Home Counties Divisional Final. However, he failed to make it to the Grand Finals at Alexandra Palace.

Leo Newstead, who attended the event that Brian and Jan witnessed, was a well-known London darter and a former European champion. He was best known as a member of the *News of the World* Team of Darts Champions which raised thousands of pounds for charities during and after the Second World War. Leo died of cirrhosis of the liver in 1980. I hope to be able to include more information about Leo in a future issue of *DDN*.

(b) Most expensive darts book...



Following my revelation in *DDN* #14 that Jocky Wilson's book *Jocky – Jocky Wilson's Own Story* (London: Arthur Barker, 1983) could be found on the Abebooks website for over £90, Chris M dropped me an e-mail to say "Thanks Patrick. Didn't know the Jocky book was rarish. I have now wrapped my copy in cotton wool." The image shows Jocky signing the contract for the book. (Publicity still © 1982 Arthur Barker Ltd.)

Chris added, "Did I ever bore you [No never Chris] with my tale of being asked, long ago when dinosaurs ruled the earth, to supply the pictures in a comic-strip version of Jocky's life story for an *avant garde* psychedelic fanzine called *The Positive Energy of Madness*? Needless to say the version bore no resemblance at all to

Jocky's real life story and I seem to remember it featured a devious Eric Bristow. I really must dig out a copy." Yes Chris you must and then you must send a sample to me so that I can share it with *DDN* readers across the globe.

So here's a question for all *DDN* subscribers, "What other famous darts players have been included in cartoon strips elsewhere?" I cannot recall any in a *strip* but if you know of any, please contact me via my website www.patrickchaplin.com.

(c) Manchester Board - Dave Francis' record

Dave Francis' feat of achieving 301 in eleven darts (straight start, straight finish) on the little Manchester log-end Board has been mentioned in the previous two issues of *DDN*.

I am pleased to report that John Gwynne has included a piece in his 'Mancunian Way' feature in the June issue of *Darts World* magazine. I will let you all (and of course Dave) know if John's article reveals news of any challenge to Dave's claim to the record.

And talking of John Gwynne...

(d) Cyprus – Chilly's Darts Open

In the May issue (*DDN* #14) I announced for all those darts fans travelling to Cyprus and being in Pafos around 14th-16th May that Chilly's Darts Open was being held at the Ambassador Restaurant. Top darts commentator John Gwynne attended the event which he described as an 'an arrow-throwing bonanza...supplemented by an exhibition challenge from former World Champions Eric Bristow and John Lowe'.



John reported that Rob Hart from Akrotiri won the Men's Singles. Rob's victory included a superb 13-darter in his 4-0 victory over local hotshot Steve Claxton. Hart picked up 1,200 Euros whilst Claxton pocketed 800 Euros. However, Claxton, formerly from Hull, did win the Men's Doubles having teamed up with Pafos pal Lee Sanderson beating Limassol duo Panicos Avraam and Evros Themistocleous in the final.

Pafos-based Karen Matthews, a former Great Britain and Scotland 800 metres athletics champion, took the Women's title by beating Limassol's Yiolanda Korradou 4-1 to take the title and the first prize of 250 Euros.

Pafos Darts League Secretary Vic Hemming thanked all the players for attending and gave special thanks to Steve White, from Chilly's (providers of ice as a drinks cooler) who sponsored the event. The image provided by John shows women's champion Karen Matthews and men's champion Rob Hart with Chilly's owner Steve White (centre) after their final successes. (Image © John Gwynne 2011)

An extended version of John's report will appear in the August edition of *Darts World* magazine.

DARTEX

Cyril E wrote to me recently informing me that he had just purchased a set of cards named 'DARTEX' which he described as 'a set of 52 cards in good condition with instructions and in original packaging'. Cyril was wondering if I'd ever come across these before. He added, "They seem quite old and the description on the pack says 'The thrilling new card game of skill and as exciting as darts'. Although he intended to keep them, Cyril wondered if they have any value.



The card game DARTEX (pictured) was introduced in 1938 when the middle and upper classes became interested in all things to do with the working class. It was another phase the wealthy was going through and one which drew them quite naturally to darts; an interest heightened when the King and Queen played a game of darts at a social centre in Slough in December 1937. One of the spin-offs from that popularity was the invention and introduction of DARTEX. The rules are too long (and fairly complicated) to be reproduced here but rest assured that (in my opinion anyway) DARTEX was *not* as 'thrilling' as the real thing.

The upper classes attraction to a new novelty, namely darts, was brief (as had been their interest in the Yo-Yo) and in any event the outbreak of the Second World War focused attention elsewhere.

As to value, I informed Cyril that I had purchased DARTEX complete and in good condition at a market in Herefordshire in 2010 and paid £7. So my response to Cyril included "My guess is that on, say, e bay with one or two collectors after it the pack might reach £15 but then who knows...?"

Cyril was thrilled with my reply because he had picked up his set of DARTEX for a mere 99p (plus postage and packing). A bargain I reckon. Cyril replied, thanking me for the information and added, "I have no intention of selling them but thanks to your expertise I now know a lot more about them as well as possible value." My pleasure Cyril.

TWISTED TERRORS

'Metalman' recently brought to my attention a question that was posted by 'Dart-Zombie' on www.dartsforum.co.uk regarding the 'twisted terror' tungstens (pictured. Image © NODOR International). The questions were "What are they?", "Who made/makes them?" and "Were they a gimmick or did they serve a function?"



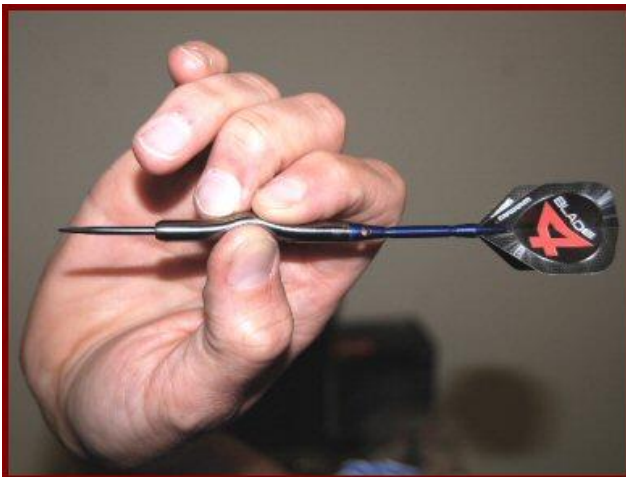
To be honest I had never set eyes on a set like this before so I asked around and two of my colleagues in the darts business responded with everything I (and Metalman and Dart-Zombie) wanted to know.

First up was Vince Bluck, Managing Director of NODOR International who told me that he had seen the design several times before. Vince said, "The design has been around for about fifteen years and, as far as I'm aware, is purely a gimmick, though quite a popular one." He added, "As far as I am aware, they have only ever been made from brass. Brass is relatively malleable which allows the dart to be "twisted" into its shape."

NODOR focuses on the premium end of the market and the vast majority of their darts are sport-engineered from military specification, Weapons Grade tungsten alloy. Vince told me, "By definition, the alloy has to be tough enough for armour-piercing projectiles to penetrate up to two inches of armour plating. This makes it extremely difficult to "twist" tungsten to the same degree as brass."

However, that's not to say that NODOR engineers haven't tried to produce "twisted tungsten" darts. Vince told me, "We produced a prototype a number of years ago".

So these twisted darts are a gimmick but can they be thrown properly?



Looking at them one would think not but Vince confirmed that "The interesting thing is that despite how crazy it looks, it actually does fly quite well and maintains a consistent trajectory in flight. Apparently, the laws of physics state that it is impossible for a bumble bee to fly. I reckon that this dart would have the scientists scratching their heads as well. Also, the "double twist" that NODOR engineered into the design provides an excellent natural grip

position as demonstrated in this photograph. Vince added, “It’s a great concept, but one that will only ever remain a gimmick as far as we are concerned. Unfortunately, with the high cost of production, these darts are not really commercially viable in tungsten.”

From ‘a sunny California’ another contact, Dr. Eddie Norman, e-mailed me during May to tell me that he had only been playing with a set of ‘twisted darts’ in New York earlier this year. However, he wasn’t absolutely sure that they are still made.” On Eddie’s advice I Googled ‘Darts Mart International (DMI)’ and found myself at The Darts Store (www.thedartstore.com). I entered ‘twisted’ in the search engine and there they were!

Further research produced the fascinating ‘Silly World of Darts Gimmicks’ and there they were again. Check out <http://dartboardreviews.com> and page down until you find ‘The Strangest Darts in the World.’

Thanks to both Vince and Eddie for their help in solving this one.

BRIAN LANGWORTH AND BOB BROWN

The world of darts was taken aback recently when, within a very short space of time, Yorkshire lost two of its greatest dartsmen.



Brian Langworth, popularly known as ‘The Legend’ played an amazing 123 ‘A’ and 29 ‘B’ team matches for Yorkshire and represented England on a number of occasions and was very proud of these achievements. He also won the Yorkshire individual championship in successive years (1978 and 1979) which as Derek Brown (author of *The Guinness Book of Darts*) was ‘no mean feat, remembering the strength of that county’.

Jean Thomas, General Secretary of the Yorkshire Darts Organisation (YDO), described Brian (pictured here) as ‘a perpetual joker, always smiling, laughing, winding up anyone he could’ and of course a tremendous darts player. So confident was he that Brian used to joke that he had only brought two darts with him to games but he would still win. Jean added, “He played with such ease that if you needed that vital point and Brian was the one going for it, it was usually in the bag, no worries.” Brian will be sadly missed by his Yorkshire county colleagues, his friends and family and much of the darts world.

Sid Waddell has written a personal memoir of Brian in the July edition of *Darts! Monthly* magazine. Seek it out and learn more about this great player.



Bob Brown (also pictured) was another stalwart of Yorkshire County darts who played 42 games for the County's 'B' team and nine for the 'A' team. Ironically during his darting career had also played for Lancashire. Speaking after Bob's funeral, Jean Thomas, told me "Bob was a well-loved family man and also well respected for his darting prowess especially in the Keighley and Bradford District Leagues."

Undoubtedly the high point of Bob's career was when he won the Yorkshire Division of the *News of the World* in 1976. Representing the Bridge Inn, Silsden, Bob travelled to London to the Alexandra Palace where he was drawn against the Wales Divisional champion, the on-form Leighton Rees in the first round and was beaten 2-1. According to his wife Sue, Bob was very proud to have made the final and treasured the fact that he had made it so far.

Bob's passing was very sudden. He had only just retired and was in Spain when he suffered a fatal heart attack. Jean Thomas told me, "From a Yorkshire point of view, one thing I would say is that Bob was always a gentleman and a sport and I know the darting world will miss him immensely."

(Thanks to Jean Thomas for information relating to both Brian and Bob's careers and to John 'Boy' Walton for providing the images © 1995 John Walton.)

LOVEDAY KING – THE FIRST SUPERSTAR OF LADIES' DARTS

Banner headlines in *Darts World* in 1981 heralded Loveday King's triumph in the British Gold Cup. Contemporaries believed Loveday was a force to be reckoned with but who is this lady darter and what is her story?

When *The Indoor League* (see DDN #14) was launched in Britain on Yorkshire Television (YTV) in 1972 it brought to prominence TV broadcaster Dave Lanning and began the darts career on TV of Sid Waddell. In its second season the programme also brought the darts world's attention to Cornwall's top ladies darts player at that time, Loveday King, when she became the first winner of the Ladies' darts title.

Loveday King was born on 8th September 1935 at



Lower Woodley, near Lanivet, Cornwall. Her parents were Vivienne and John Carter. Her father was a mason and eventually, in addition to Loveday, he and Vivienne had six other daughters and two sons. In the early 1950s Loveday married the love of her life Tommy King and together they had two daughters (Patricia and Lorraine) and one son (Mark).

Loveday told me recently that in 1952, "Tommy got me into darts". Numerous local successes in darts tournaments followed but one particular event that sprang to her mind was victory in the Newquay and District Darts League Ladies' Doubles in 1968 in which she was partnered by her sister Pauline. In the early 1970s Loveday became the Cornwall Ladies' darts champion. That performance was noticed by Charlie Burden, Chairman of the National Darts Association of Great Britain (NDAGB), who put her name forward for *The Indoor League* as Cornwall's ladies representative.

Next thing, Loveday found herself in front of the cameras and made her way to the final of the Ladies' tournament where she beat Doncaster's Jessie 'Javelin' Catterick to win the title. Loveday told me, "It was wonderful. I was a complete unknown yet beat some of the top lady players in England." She also recalled how well all the competitors were treated by the *Indoor League* team of Sid, Dave and the host, England's cricket star Freddie Trueman. Loveday added, "When I received my gold medal [*which she still has in her possession*] for winning *The Indoor League* from Freddie Trueman he had a job to say my name so we had to have a re-run."

Sid Waddell was to later write in the book *The Indoor League* (London: Pan Books, 1975) that Loveday was 'feared by many men in Cornwall.' Was that true? Loveday said, "Yes" and then added, "No man likes being beaten by a woman." That is as true today as it ever was.

In December 1973 brought another TV appearance when Loveday became the first woman darts player to be featured in the *TV Times* Xmas Darts Spectacular. She recalled, "In it I played a celebrities match with Cliff Inglis [*Cliff was later to become the first World Masters title holder*]. Cliff played with four-inch nails and we won a cheque for £500 for our chosen charities."



In early 1974 Loveday, who threw heavy, 26grm darts, was picked to play for her county, Cornwall. She told me, "I always wore 2 ¼ inch heeled shoes so I was the same height to the board." Her favourite double was double 16. Her career in county darts lasted until about 1990 but before she gave up darts Loveday recorded some exceptional darting moments. Later in 1974 Loveday and Wadebridge's John Moon (pictured, copyright holder unknown) won the

Cornwall County Darts Association's Mixed Pairs title at the Mount Charles' Social Club, St. Austell. Loveday described John as 'a real nice gentleman'. In 1978 Loveday partnered her husband Tom to victory in the Cornwall Mixed Doubles at the Cavalier Club, Newquay. She told me, "Twenty-eight pairs entered and Tom and I won. One of my finishes was 151 out, treble 20, treble 17, double 20." That same evening but at a different venue their son Mark won the Cornwall Youth title. Loveday said, "Tom and I were upset that we were not there to support him but we were very proud of him."

On 12th November 1978 Loveday played her first game for England in a home international organised by the NDAGB against the 'auld enemy' Scotland at Morecambe in Lancashire. England's men won the tournament but unfortunately I could find no trace of the ladies' individual match scores in *Darts World*. However, Loveday recalled, "I was last on and the score was 2-2. I played a great game, scoring 180, winning 2-0 and winning the match for England." A standing ovation followed. Loveday added, "The four other ladies in the England team could not believe I could go on stage only having had a cup of tea! They were all on gin, vodka, etc." Loveday declared that playing for her country was the highlight of her darting career, even more special than winning the British Gold Cup.

This happened in November 1981 at Jollees cabaret nightclub in Stoke-on-Trent. Things started exceptionally well for Loveday as she knocked out the post-match favourite Maureen Flowers and then went on to win the title beating Avon's Jean Smith 3-2 in the final. Loveday, who felt 'over the moon' at winning the prestigious title, told me, "It was a very tough match and Jean was a very strong competitor but she did not like losing to me." *Darts World* described Jean's challenge in the final as 'a fiery performance'. Her prize for winning the British Gold Cup was a cheque for £500. So what did she spend the money on? Loveday told me, "Tom and I bought a telephone with some of the money. We never had one before." The victory also saw Loveday on the front cover of the December 1981 issue of *Darts World* (pictured earlier) along with the Men's champion, Wales' Tony Skuse.

Loveday played for her county for 16 years and then after 1990 she played on a casual basis in Tom's Wadebridge 'Dry League', a local league formed in 1945/46 so that youngsters could also participate in the game without the temptation of alcohol. However, as the first decade of the new millennium drew to a close Loveday had a hip and knee replacement which effectively put paid to any further darting activities.



Looking back over a darts lifetime that spanned nearly 60 years Loveday recalled the players she most admired, John Lowe, Jocky Wilson, Alan Evans and Bob Anderson, the latter about whom she told me, "Bob comes to Wadebridge to play darts. I know him very well." And Bob know her too. He told me recently, "Loveday is a very lovely lady. It could be argued that Loveday was the first real superstar of ladies darts." (The image shows Bob with Loveday. Image © Bob

and Sally Anderson.) On her record I think I would agree with Bob. Loveday never went full-time professional. Back then, as now, few ladies could make darts a career.



Loveday and Tom were very family oriented and in addition to their own children she has six grand children and two great-grandchildren. In June 2010 Loveday's husband and life partner Tom died suddenly. Over a year on she is still trying to come to terms with this most personal of tragedies. Supported by her loving family, she told me, "I don't know what I would have done without them." The final image provided by Loveday shows her at home a few months ago with her family photographs and some of her darts trophies.

It has been a pleasure for me to be able to record Loveday's story.

AND FINALLY...

Subscriber Marcus G., from the Philippines, recently wrote to me asking, "By pressing a soft ball with your hands as an exercise, does it help to increase your hand strength and improve your dart throw?"

I told Marcus that, in my opinion anything that helps strengthen the hands should help improve his dart throw. However, I asked Marcus to remember that most of the action of dart-throwing comes from the arm and so if he is strengthening his hands then he should also undertake exercises to strengthen his arms too.

I emphasised the importance of overall general fitness for darts players in my book *The Official Bar Guide to Darts*. John Lowe, in his *The Art of Darts*, also stresses the importance of overall fitness. Both John's and my book are available via Amazon.com.

COMING UP IN ISSUE 17

The next issue of *DDN* will reveal the story of Stan Allen - Elm dartboard maker and, amongst other fascinating items, include quirky darts car registration numbers, more on wheelchair darts plus much more. Until then...

Best wishes to you all,

Patrick

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