

DR. DARTS' NEWSLETTER

Issue 19 October 2011



The *DDN* family keeps getting bigger and bigger

Welcome to Issue #19 and welcome too to all those who have joined our happy throng since the September issue. We've added two new countries to the ever-growing list of *DDN* subscribers, namely China and Samoa.

In this issue I will be introducing you to Mark Brindza, dartboard collector extraordinaire, and telling the life story of one of England's greatest darts players, County Durham's Doug McCarthy.

Welcome one and all.

FROM PREVIOUS ISSUES

(a) Dart flight collecting

Back in Issue 17, I featured Martyn C who had just begun to collect dart flights in a serious way. Now Martyn has dropped me a line to bring me up to date with his hobby.

He writes,

"Hi Patrick, I thought I would just let you know that I now have my own little website. It's a bit of fun really. I have my dart flight collection and other things to do with me and my interests. Check it out and let me know what you think."

So I checked it out and my view is that it's pretty impressive for 'just a bit of fun'. Anyone interested in dart flight collecting should take some time out to visit Martyn's website at <http://www.martsdarts.co.uk>.

If you have a website showing your collection of darts memorabilia, be it flights, darts, dartboards or a combination of those plus lots more, why not tell me about it? I'll check it out and then tell all my



subscribers to pay a call.

(b) Leighton Rees – Trevillion cartoon

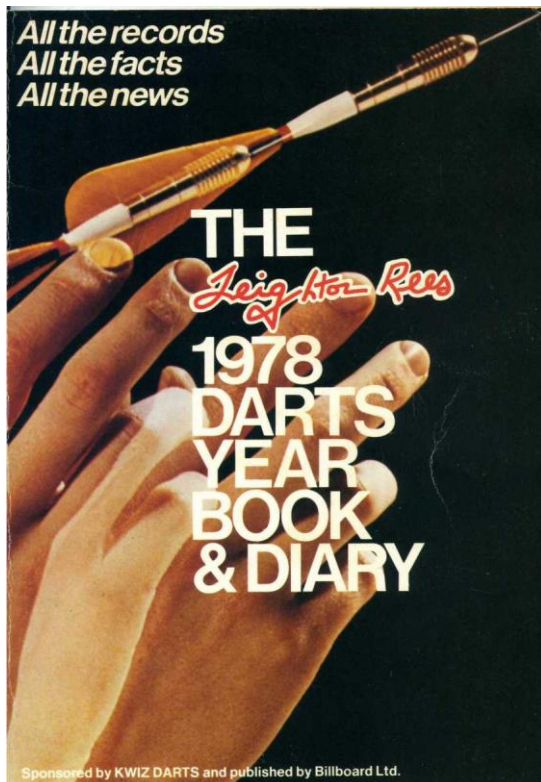
In *DDN #16* Chris M mentioned that had had once drawn a cartoon strip of Jocky Wilson for a magazine. This comment was followed up in Issue 17 when Eddie N., former manager of Leighton Rees, who recalled the UK newspaper the *Sunday People* publishing a cartoon of Leighton some years ago. Eddie did not have a copy so I mentioned it and guess what happened? Once again, a *DDN* subscriber rose to the challenge.

Jim MacN of the Highland Darts Association in Scotland saw the article, searched through his scrapbooks (they go back to 1970) and discovered the very cartoon Eddie mentioned in a cutting from the *Sunday People* dated 2nd April 1978.

Unfortunately, for copyright reasons, I cannot reproduce the strip cartoon here but, thanks to Jim, Eddie is now an even happier man than he normally is. (Thanks Jim.) Eddie e-mailed me from somewhere on his latest USA business tour and wrote:

“That is amazing !!! That the cutting on Leighton turned up. Yes. That is the one that I was telling you about and the original I presented to Leighton in a frame and mounted. (I thought it was by Trevillion so my memory is still intact!)”

Eddie told me that Trevillion also did a caricature of Eddie throwing a dart in his evening suit complete with ‘dicky bow’. Eddie said, “I used it for years on my business cards and price lists [*For the House of Darts International*] and it certainly attracted some comments.”



He added, “I still feel staggered that it turned up. It is amazing how things turn up. Patrick, as you know, I wrote a *1978 Leighton Rees Yearbook* published by Billboard. I never even kept a copy as I gave my last copy away. Then in 1980 I was in Malaysia when a local darts player came up to me and asked for an autograph (I do not get asked that often!) and he gave me a copy of my book to sign and it turned out Leighton had signed it and given it to him.

He then asked me to sign a 1974 programme of the first World Masters as I was on the programme front as the organiser. Leighton had also given him that as well and signed it. It turned out he had a wonderful collection of darts memorabilia.”

Even the man who wrote *The Leighton Rees 1978 Darts Year Book & Diary*, published by Billboard Ltd., in 1977 and sponsored by Kwiz Darts does not have a copy of his own book. How tragic is that?

(c) Media update

It's been fairly quiet for me on the media front lately although I was really pleased when one of my provincial newspapers, the *East Anglian Daily Times* wrote a two-page article about me and my work last month. The reporter, Steven Russell, interviewed me over the phone for some time and produced, in my opinion, one of the best ever (and most accurate) articles about my life and work that I have ever read. For those subscribers who would like to read the article it is now available via the following link:

[http://www.eadt.co.uk:80/news/features/essex the two ronnies darts and me 1 1013189](http://www.eadt.co.uk:80/news/features/essex%20the%20ronnies%20darts%20and%20me%201%201013189)

Then, earlier this month, I was asked to be interviewed one of my local radio stations, Saint FM which serves the town in which I live and the immediate surrounding area. Mark Wright (pictured), a guy new to radio, had come up with the idea of a Saturday lunchtime programme called 'Oche on the Radio' in which he plays some top quality music interspersed with local and national news about darts.

We had a great time in which we discussed my website and books whilst at the same time asking some quite probing questions about my work as a darts researcher. (I also managed to mention *DDN*.) But the hour was soon over and I was on my way home with a promise to Mark that I would come back at any time to talk about darts. I'm hoping that this 'Oche Jockey' will go on from success to success.



DDN FOCUS ON...

'THE CHEERFUL GEORDIE' - DOUG McCARTHY

This month my star of the oche is England International and County Durham county stalwart Doug McCarthy.

Doug first picked up a dart when he was eight years old. His mother Gertrude and father Stephen gave Doug his first dartboard (made of compressed paper and not full-size) and

darts for Christmas that year. That was the beginning of a life-long passion for the sport which has continued to the present day.

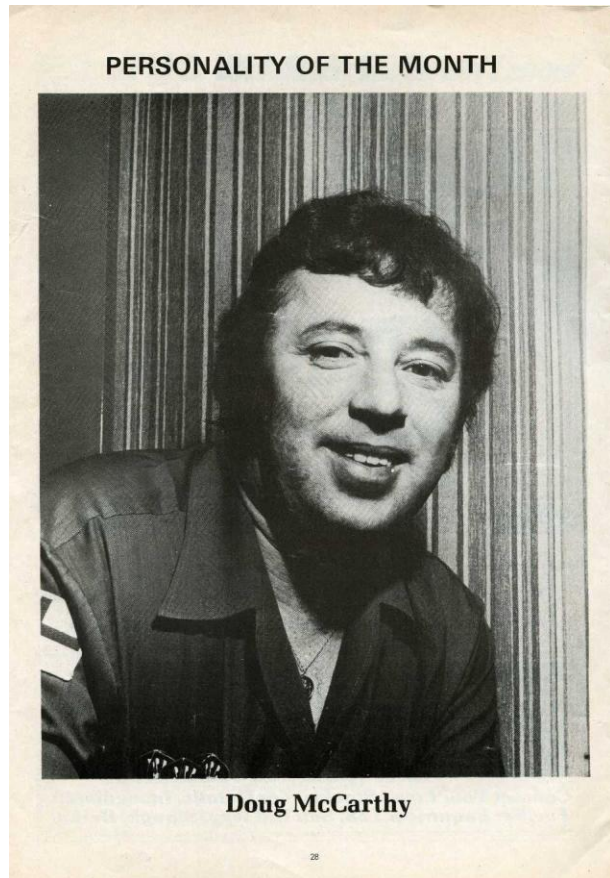
Doug McCarthy was born in August 1942 in Tow Law, County Durham and still lives less than four miles away in Crook. After leaving school he trained as a master butcher and, being self-employed, it was a trade which allowed him to take time off for darts as he became more involved with the game.

Amazingly, Doug continued to practice at home on the small compressed paper dartboard his parents gave him until he was in his early twenties. He told me, "The smaller target improved my skills and so the larger, standard target looked huge by comparison and was much easier to hit."

Doug played his first pub darts at the age of sixteen but was not allowed to join a league until he was eighteen. But this did not deter him as he played money matches and honed his skills that way. His role model was a local player named Stan Conway who played for the King's Head, Crook. "He was a big money player", said Doug, "Stan was coming to the end of his career when I took up serious darts but I learned a lot from him." A second darts player who influenced Doug was another local man, Jeff Barrett. "He was the man who taught me to count" said Doug. "Jeff told me 'If you can't count; you can't play darts'."

Doug's first league game was playing for the Earl Derby pub near Tow Law around 1960. He played for the same pub for thirteen years and then transferred his allegiance to the King's Head, Crook. In the 1970s he was selected to play for County Durham and in all Doug played 168 county matches. (He also played one friendly match representing Fife but that, as they say, is another story!) Doug stopped playing county darts in 1986, then resumed for one game only in 1999 and then did not rejoin the team again until 2000 after undergoing treatment for cancer. He then continued to play for County Durham until the beginning of 2007.

In 1977 Doug was selected to play for England and his first match was in Newcastle against Scotland. England beat Scotland 10-5 on the day with Doug recording success over Willy Scott 3-2. He was also only one of five men to record a maximum 180 during the international. In his first ten matches for his country Doug lost only once.



Playing for his country was a major breakthrough for Doug and was part of the reason he joined the professional ranks. Success came quickly and in 1978 he was a member of the Europe Cup winning team (other members being John Lowe, Eric Bristow and Cliff Lazarenko). This was followed by victory (partnering John Lowe) in the Guinness Golden Darts tournament that same year. He joined the lucrative exhibition circuit, taking on sixteen players in an evening at 1001-up. “I loved it”, said Doug, “It was lots of fun. Scotland and Northumberland was really my patch.” (The picture above shows Doug in 1980 when he was selected as darts ‘Personality of the Month’ by the magazine *Darts Northern News*.)

Every darts player has a dream and Doug’s was to win the Embassy World Championship but it was a dream never to be realised. He recalled, “I made the finals about five times during the late 1970s/early 1980s but lost on each occasion”. This included a second round 2-0 defeat in 1979 by the eventual champion, John Lowe.

In the 1985/86 season Doug suffered what he described as ‘a complete slump in form’. He left the professional circuit and returned to the butchery trade. At the time he could not explain why his darts play had disintegrated. Back in 1981 *Daily Mirror* sportswriter Derek Brown, describing Doug as ‘a cheerful Geordie’, declared that nothing could wipe the smile off of Doug’s face, not even arthritis, which affected Doug’s throwing arm. (Doug is naturally left-handed but throws darts with his right hand.) However, Doug was certain that the arthritis was not the cause of his collapse of form. Much later he realised that the ‘slump’ had coincided with him giving up smoking and he had not, until that time, connected the two!

Derek Brown also mentioned Doug in his book *Darts 78* (London: Mirror Books, 1977). In the chapter sub-titled ‘Who chucked darts at his wedding?’ both Doug and his County Durham team-mate John ‘Bonner’ Thompson were mentioned in glowing terms but it was Doug who Brown revealed as ‘a restless dartsman who itches to play whenever he sees a board. He cannot stop and watch.’

Such was Doug’s passion for the sport that he even carried his darts with him on his wedding day. He confessed to Derek Brown, “My darts go everywhere with me and when I married they were in my breast pocket. We had the reception in a pub and when nobody was watching I chucked darts.” Later Sid Waddell in his book *Bellies and Bullseyes* (London: Ebury Press, 2007) remembered Doug with affection, recalling that Doug was indeed ‘the man who played darts in a pub bar while his wedding reception carried on upstairs.’

Regrets? Doug told me, “I regret having been away from home so much in my professional days.” (Doug has been happily married to his wife Vera for 45 years and has two daughters and four grandchildren.) When I interviewed Doug back in 2008 his other regret was the loss of his scrapbook of cuttings dating back to the start of his career. “All the information about my life in darts was in that scrapbook” said Doug. “The book means so much to me and I would love to have it back but regrettably I cannot remember

who I leant it to.” Then – a miracle! Some months after an appeal for its return was published in *Darts World* magazine, Doug rang me to tell me that the scrapbook (entirely intact and undamaged) had been returned. It had arrived in the post, bore a local postmark but inside there was no clue as to who had had the scrapbook for all those years.

Today, despite his hands ‘creaking a bit’ and again suffering a drop in form (like he mentioned back in the 1985/86 season, darts remains a major part of Doug’s life. Indeed, he still takes his darts with him wherever he goes (see photo below of Doug (third from the right) with darting friends whilst on holiday on the island of Zante in 2009.)



The small, compressed paper dartboard is long gone. For many years Doug has practiced on a ‘Champions Choice’ board, the board with smaller doubles and trebles. Doug still plays competitive darts, including Super League, most days of the week and occasionally meets up with some of his erstwhile darting pals, including Eric Bristow and John Lowe. Whilst Doug admits that “I am past my best playing years” his ambition is “To play darts as long as I can”; the reason being because “I still love it.”

Doug McCarthy’s life has been one committed whole-heartedly to the sport he loves - darts. Long may he continue to toe the oche.

AVOIDING THE MADHOUSE

Justin ‘The Bachelor of Darts’ Irwin contacted me in September to say that he and his associate ‘Tricky D’ had now published ‘The Wrong Bed’s Manifesto for Darts’. Justin

(pictured) told me, “The aim of the document is to highlight some of what we think will be the key issues in darts in the medium to long-term. The points made are not meant to be critical of either darts body. In particular, we hope that our thoughts may help shape the future of the sport just a little, and that both darts bodies may build on their positive achievements.”



I checked out the Manifesto online at www.thewrongbed.com and found it fascinating and (in places) controversial stuff. I strongly recommend all *DDN* subscribers to check out Justin’s Manifesto and let him have your feedback via his website. In the meantime Justin, I know it’s a cliché but ‘Keep up the good work.’

MARK BRINDZA – DARTBOARD COLLECTOR

When I started collecting darts memorabilia many years ago I felt a little lonely as there were no other people that I knew of who shared my passion. Since the coming of the internet, the launch of my website and, last year, the publication of the first issue of *DDN*, the world of collecting has opened up before my very eyes. Now I know for sure that I am not alone. Take Mark Brindza for example.

Mark lives in Warminster, Philadelphia, USA and he e-mailed me to say, “I am an avid dartboard/dart collector...” (No. *Really?* See below...)



Mark continued, “I heard about your website through correspondence with some dart collectors on your side of the water. I have since subscribed to your newsletter and find it very fascinating. I am especially interested in the history of darts and dartboards.”

Mark told me that he has only been collecting for two years but what a collection he has accumulated in such a short time! He told me, “My passion for this game is so great I am constantly searching for more. I currently have 79 boards [*as at September 2011*] and still growing.” As you can see from the photograph Marks’ room is set up in a way that he has one board set up to regulation height on each side of the room. Recently he has also been concentrating more on his dart collection since he is running out of room; the overflow dartboards are now hanging in his garage. (Careful not to let them get damp in there Mark.)

Mark added, “Unfortunately my collection of dartboards is primarily from the US as shipping costs make it impractical from overseas. I do get most of my darts for my collection from over there because you guys have all the good stuff. I would love to be able to get a hold of some old English style boards.

I have a vast collection of wood Deco boards and also have two of the first boards made by Apex. I keep in touch with the owners of Apex and Darto (formerly Deco). Widdy is in a bad area of town or I would be in there also. It is a shame they are all family owned businesses and after this generation they may all go away.”

That’s sad news that family-owned companies are threatened and may be gone soon but with enthusiasts like Mark helping to preserve the darting past at least the heritage of our sport is in good hands. Mark’s extensive collection of dartboards and darts can be viewed at:

www.flickr.com/photos/dart-dartboard/

If you share Mark’s enthusiasm for dartboard collecting why not contact him on mbrindza@verizon.net

OBITUARIES

It’s always sad to record the passing of heroes of the oche and this month I must record the deaths of two men who made their mark on English darts even though the majority of fans new to the game may never have heard of their exploits.

(i) Brian Netherton

Brian Netherton, the *News of the World* Individual Darts Champion 1971/72, and the only Cornishman to win the title passed away on 16th September having bravely fought his battle against terminal cancer. Cornwall Darts Association’s Peter Mutton told me, “Brian came from an era when they were gentlemen first, dart players second. He only

three times for Cornwall as I am told his work in the clay industry at the time and with his shift patterns he could not commit fully to county darts.”

Peter also informed me that a Facebook page had been set up by his daughter ‘R I P Brian Netherton’ and that there were numerous comments there one of which stated that Brian ‘was a true gentleman and an excellent darts player.’

I will be including a fuller report on Brian’s 1972 *News of the World* championship win (where he beat the hot favourite Alan Evans with a bull finish) in the next issue of *DDN*.

(ii) Norman Fielding

One of the numerous unsung heroes of darts history, Norman Fielding died on 19th September 2011...see e-mails and **Tom Barrett quote**.

BERND HEBECKER

My good friend Charis from Germany recently advised me that she has recently interviewed the German darts legend Bernd Hebecker. Bernd who for some years played on the BDO circuit talks about his life in darts and the history of the sport of darts in his country. The article, written in English, can be accessed via this link:

<http://www.globaldarts.de/globalDartsEN/interviews/BerndHebecker.html>

The photo included here shows Bernd with Alan Warriner when the darters came joint third in the Europe Cup in 1992 **[CHECK]**

The muzzy article is now live on the site - <http://www.dartsmad.com/darts-news/2011/09/22/tungsten-tash-top-ten/>

Speak to you soon...

Cheers!

DartsMad Lee

From: DartsMad Lee [mailto:lee@dartsmad.com]

Sent: 12 September 2011 12:23

To: 'Patrick Chaplin'

Cc: 'Steve'

Subject: RE: Darting Moustaches

Hello Patrick,

I’ve written my muzzy article and attached for your feedback – any glaring errors? or do you have some additional info that can be worked in? Better pictures would be good as well if you can improve on any of them. It is very tongue in cheek, bordering on farce,

but this is the way it took me when I started writing it so I just carried on! Hopefully this is the first of a series.

I've done one revision so I think it's grammatically correct and there are no spelling errors but let me know if you spot any.

Cheers!

DartsMad Lee

SCORING FOR SHOW, DOUBLES FOR DOUGH

I received a rather strange e-mail recently which read "I see that you and Bobby Dazzler have written a book *Scoring for Show – Doubles for Dough*. Could you tell me what it's about please?" Surely the person could find that out via my website or via Amazon but, no. My response was to send him a copy of Dan William Peek's review. It's probably the best review Bobby and I have received thus far. Over to you Dan.

Scoring for Show, Doubles for Dough

Reviewed by Dan William Peek – July 14, 2011

This is a unique book, in just about every way. And it all works.

The front cover features Bobby George, veteran British darts pro decked out like a Christmas tree in shiny red shirt and enough gold chain and diamond rings to fund another trip to Hollywood for William and Kate. He appears to be laughing manically, his face as red as his shirt. Surely several blood vessels did not survive the photo shoot. Behind him is a Bobby George signature dartboard. Inside the back cover is another photo of George and his co-author, Dr. Patrick Chaplin. Dr. Chaplin contemplates the camera with quiet elegance, while Bobby seems to be only somewhat calmed of the fit of mirth on the front cover. If you weren't familiar with Chaplin's chosen profession, you might think something like "My god, what has Patrick gotten himself into?"

What Patrick Chaplin, Ph. D of Darts, has gotten himself into is a rollicking, spot on romp through the culture of the sport of darts. Even if Dr. Chaplin were not credited with authorship, it would not be difficult to recognize his imprimatur. For example, alternative phrases or terms are preceded by the words "also collected". That's a folklorist and etymologist tag, a tip off I think that the Dr. has worked Bobby George's Darts Lingo like the veteran, determined scholar that we know him to be. And the proof is there, in the proverbial pudding.

For his part, George is the perfect pairing for Chaplin in this endeavor. Profane – self-censorship an alien concept, it seems. Irreverent, non-stop and rapid fire, his prose wafts the scent of intense competition laced with hi jinks, guffaws, smoke filled pubs and pints

of ale, the odd shot of whisky tossed off now and then to stir things up a bit. In short, Bobby George embodies the sport of darts. Bobby *is* darts, real darts - authentic and authoritative darts. His voice is gritty and good to the last turn of phrase.

Here's a sample George-ism from the book. This is something he tells disgruntled pub shooters: "The doubles are all the same size; they just live in different places".

The book is about what it says it is about, "darts lingo". And a special language is very important in the development of a sport. Sports are games or exercises that have attached additional requirements having to do with things like language and style and methods of expressing emotion. A sport is created through the development of a culture specific to the contest of skill or strength from which it arises.

This book is, however, no mere glossary of darts phrases and terms, it is an exacting fun filled examination and analysis of the language and culture of darts in the English speaking world. The history of the phrase is often revealed. There is, for example, a terrific discussion of the origin of the terms "hockey" and "oche", as well as "bull's-eye", "middle" and "cork" and many others.

American readers will be pleased with the number of terms shared with the overseas practitioners of the sport there are more than a few. The only shared term I found that was not as I have heard it a few times in the darts venues of America was "Middle for Diddle". I have heard it here as "Diddle for the Middle". The book correctly points out that in the USA people "shoot" darts rather than "play" the sport.

The only discussion in the book that I would perhaps take issue with is the one about a "Friendly Match". The authors say that this means a casual round of darts and that it arises from the way in which brewers initially presented the idea of leagues to pubs and patrons. So there is justification for including the phrase, but I have witnessed a significant number of darts contests and I have yet to gaze upon a truly "friendly match".

I think this book substantially advances the sport toward a universal language. I doubt that much of the rhyming cockney darts slang that has been around for decades will ever really cross the Pond. But there are enough terms in common to indicate a general melding of global darts lingo. This is an essential progression for any sport.

As noted, though, this is a book about the culture and history of darts as revealed through its language and traditions. Best example: there is included a delightful, Joycean anecdote about Jack Hood, who manufactured dart boards in England during the early and mid-twentieth century. When asked what material he used in the manufacture, he replied that he used the wood of the Elm tree. In darts he explained, "Men play with the same wood as they are buried in."

Just perfect – buy this book at once.

Dan William Peek

Dan William Peek is a writer who lives with his wife, Joy, near Columbia, Missouri. Dan is the author of *To The Point: The Story of Darts in America*. His book, *Live! At the Ozark Opry* was recently published by The History Press. [IMAGE OF DAN AND JOY]

For 'Dr. Darts' review of Dan's *To the Point*... [click here](#).

Can you help? This may be more of a collectors subject: Only a few months after I picked up darts in 1985, I bought a set of Bristow DURRO-darts. The following winter I became aware of Eric's shift to Harrows and of course I bought a set of those too. I don't have them anymore, but sure would like to have them in my collection. Do You happen to know any collectors, internet sites or shops where I could look for these two sets of darts in 22grms?
I'm aware they will probably cost a bit of money these days, but where to look?

Best regards
Kent Bovin

AND FINALLY...

Is this a record? Gerald W joined our happy band of subscribers on 21st September. I sent him Issue 18 and he unsubscribed on 23rd!

i do not want to subscribe to dr darts newsletters

NEXT MONTH...Brian Netherton versus Alan Evans – *The News of the World* 1972 final. Darryl Hallam

Until next time...

Cheers!

Patrick

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