

DR. DARTS' NEWSLETTER

Issue 22 February 2012



INTRODUCTION

Well, that's the hectic World Championship darts season over for another year. Lots of class matches and a number of games we'd all probably prefer to forget. I don't intend to write a review of the PDC and BDO tournaments as these are more than adequately covered on both websites and in the national newspapers except for the ladies' championships of course which once again failed to grab the headlines despite some excellent darts thrown at Lakeside especially by Deta Hedman and Anastasia Dobromyslova. If Deta had had her semi-final mindset with her in the final I think things would have turned out differently.

However, the image shown here takes us back to the 2011 Cash Converters Players Championship when 'local lad' Kevin Painter (he used to live seven miles from me and played for Essex County) took the title, the first major of his lengthy darting career. (Image © 2011 Chris Sargeant, used with permission)



No more chat from me as we've a lot to get through...but first some very sad news.

TRINA'S MUM

Sad to have to relate but Trina Gulliver's mum Muriel died at 1.30 a.m. on 5th January after a long illness. Many darts players and fans will know that Muriel, whenever possible, was always at her daughters' side especially at major tournaments where she was often shown on TV in the Lakeside audience urging her daughter on to another triumph.

For Trina to play to defend her title was not a difficult decision to make. Whatever Trina's personal thoughts or feelings were we do know that her mum insisted that she defended her world title this year. Trina thus played under enormous pressure and I believe that fully explains why she was not on her best form at Lakeside. (How could she possibly have been?)



I met Muriel on a number of occasions and yes she was a very, very special lady. Trina's enduring love for and devotion to her mum is best summed up by Trina herself. In the Dedication in her autobiography *Golden Girl* (2008) Trina wrote:

'Mum, you have been, and continue to be my rock. Your patience, understanding and unconditional love are special qualities that you offer, not just to me but to all the family. You have

always taught me to be the best person I can be. You have sacrificed so much in your life for all of us. You're an amazing lady and I'm proud to call you my mum. If I become half the person you are in my lifetime, then I'll be really proud of myself...Mum, I love you so much.'

It would be hard to imagine a more appropriate eulogy to Muriel.

(The image here shows Trina and her mum Muriel at the UK Open at Bridlington last year. Image © 2011 David King, reproduced with permission.)

FOLLOW UP FROM PREVIOUS ISSUES

(i) Wheelchair Darts

Over the past two years or more I have been reporting on the fantastic work being undertaken by Russ Strobel in Australia in facilitating darts for wheelchair users. Russ dropped me a line at the end of December to tell me that his year ended with a radio interview with his local station ABC. The interview can be heard in full by going to: http://www.wheelchairdarts.com/ABC_Radio_Interview.mp3.

Russ, I sincerely wish you continued success throughout 2012 and beyond.

(ii) My website

While my website experienced many thousands of page downloads during December and January – the busiest time of the year for visitors – the facility to enable fans to join our happy throng was down throughout that period and thus I have no idea how many new subscribers I may have lost. There seemed to be nothing my new webmaster could do about this but a good friend has come to my rescue and chances are that the facility will be back on line very soon. In the meantime, if anyone should mention this problem to any

DDN readers please ask them to e-mail me via the Contact page of my website and I'll add them to the list.

(iii) More feedback

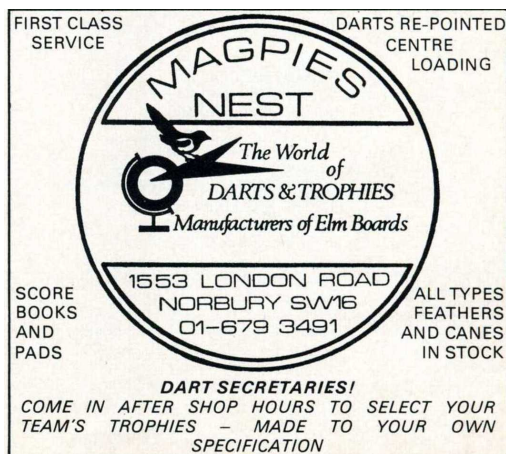
I continue to receive positive feedback from darts fans about the website content and *DDN*. For example I was pleased to receive an e-mail recently from Saul, from Canada who wrote "Thank you for this site. I have spent hours devouring the darts information/history you've gone to great lengths to publish on here. I cannot thank you enough. I'm hoping to read your books one day. Until then, I'll just continue exploring the great site you've created."

Steffen H from Germany wrote "Thanks a lot Patrick for your important work for the dart history and for honouring one of our German players, Bernd Hebeker." [Bernd (pictured) was featured in *DDN* #19]



Then there's this super response from Mick S from the UK who told me how much he enjoyed the features on the late Brian Netherton [*DDN* #19 and #20] and the 'Magpie's Nest' [*DDN* #20]. He wrote, "Another fantastic read. Memory Lane is a lovely place when you read something like your report [*about Brian*].

It's so strange to see you write about the 'Magpie's Nest' [*see 1976 advert below*]. That is the shop where I bought my first set of tungstens and if my memory serves me right it was 1976. The darts (which I still have) were 'Saturn Junior' made by Paxman. The weight is 22 grammes. They are copper tungsten and believe it or not cost me £20. My wages at the time (£40) makes them look very expensive.



Whenever I played local league darts with them you dare not put them on the table as they would most likely go missing. How things have changed with darts now only a few pounds per set in some cases."

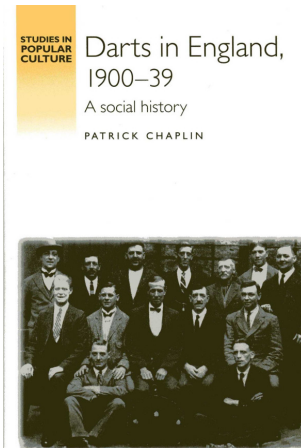
Thanks to Saul, Steffen and Mick for contacting me. I very much hope that, once the webmaster issue has been sorted, the whole website will be upgraded during 2012. I will, of course, keep all *DDN* readers up to date with developments.

(iv) *Darts in England 1900-1939 – A social history*

DDN readers will be aware that the book based on my PhD *Darts in England 1900-1939 – A social history*, was published by Manchester University Press (MUP) in hardback in 2009.

Due to it being an academic book the print run was relatively small and the price high (£55 sterling). This meant that the book was far too expensive for most darts fans to buy. Since then I have been pressing MUP to issue a less expensive softback version and I am very pleased to say that I seem to have succeeded.

Although I am awaiting formal confirmation from my publisher it is hoped that the softback version will be available by the end of the year. More to follow later.



TED HANKEY

Phil the Postman dropped me a line after the Lakeside World Professional Darts Championship about the biggest story of the week, WINMAU-sponsored Ted Hankey moving to the PDC. Phil wrote, “I would like to know your thoughts on the, if I can call it, *defection*, of ‘The Count’ Ted Hankey from the BDO to the PDC circus. I have known Ted for a number of years now and have found him to be not only a real gentleman but also a great supporter of grass roots darts i.e. the BDO. I must say I was a little surprised at his actions but there we go...”

I told Phil that I had mentioned Ted possibly swapping codes to a senior BDO official at Lakeside when an article had appeared about it in the *Daily Mirror* the previous week. The report dated 3rd January had begun, ‘Double World Champion Ted Hankey is once more on the radar of the PDC.’ The response I received at that time was “He’s been saying that for years. It’s a good story.” That was absolutely right. Ted had been reported as ‘defecting’ on a number of previous occasions but the stories had come to nothing. However, by the end of the week he’d gone.



I’ve never met Ted face-to-face but have seen him in the Player’s Bar at Lakeside. When he was having a bad day I have witnessed Ted walking into the bar swearing and cursing about some thing or some person but that’s all part of being Ted: part of his display. (Unfortunately I don’t have an image of Ted at the 2012 Lakeside so I’ve included this photo taken when

we were all a lot younger. (Image copyright holder not known but probably Steve Daszko. Source: DWPC Archive)

I guess it's the money that's finally lured him away. With Ted's departure the BDO loses its last real high-profile character. He's the Marmite man of darts, you either love him or hate him, but that's what makes him so watchable. The PDC has no real characters nowadays (the last one being Wayne Mardle) and I put that down to the huge amounts of money darters can earn on the PDC tour. Players simply cannot afford to mess about: leave that for the exhibitions.

The BDO will miss Ted (and so will I as I don't have satellite TV). Whatever fans think of Ted he is a great player and an asset to the sport of darts for any number of reasons and I guess the PDC will be slapping each other on the back for achieving such a coup.

I also read in *The Sun* that 2012 Ladies' champion Anastasia Dobromyslova is reviewing her position with the BDO after problems relating to her flights just before her Ladies' semi-final. She is quoted as saying "I've been treated very badly since returning from the PDC and have a tough decision to make." Not such a loss for the BDO perhaps as Ted but with the news that another top BDO name and WINMAU-sponsored player, Dean Winstanley, also joined the PDC during January, the BDO won't want anyone else jumping ship at such a time as this. But who knows..."

LETTER FROM CANADA

John T. from London, Ontario, Canada writes, "Many thanks for your latest edition. I am very impressed with your in-depth research for darts history. I have been playing this game for 68 years, started when 10 years old on an old board hanging on the gate of my old home. I'm sure at that time I could never envisage how the game has taken off. I'm still playing competitively and hope to do so for another year or so providing the arthritis doesn't get any worse."

I thought I was doing well having played darts for...well, for more years than I care to think about! Well done John. I may not be a medical doctor but I suggested to John that he might try taking a turmeric capsule every day. I started taking them five years ago when arthritis began affecting my hands and this 'treatment' has arrested the development of the condition thus far. Hopefully this solution will work for John and so he'll be playing darts not only for the next couple of years but also for many more years to come.

FRANCIS HOENSELAAR

Towards the end of 2011 I heard a rumour that Francis Hoenselaar, the 2009 Lakeside Ladies' World Darts Champion, had retired from darts. I was uncertain about the accuracy of the information so contacted 'The Dutch Crown' to ascertain whether or not what I had heard was true. Thankfully I was wrong. Fran told me:

“It’s a misunderstanding about my retiring. I’m only quitting the national Dutch team. I have done that for 20 years, so it’s time for the new generation to play for the Dutch flag. For 2012 I have a sponsor, Finder Relais Nederland. They are already sponsoring Trina Gulliver and Martin Adams a few years. The reasons way I didn’t play any tournaments after winning the Antwerp Open in 2011 was for personal matters. So next year I will try to make my way up the rankings again.”

That’s great news for Fran’s legion of fans and for all followers of ladies’ darts.



Good luck Fran!

(The image shows me with Fran, Trina Gulliver and Clare Bywaters, taken at the WINMAU World Masters AT Bridlington in 2005. (Image © 2005 Moppix))

DARTS BADGE COLLECTING

Daryl Hallam has e-mailed me from Kangaroo Flat, Victoria, Australia to tell me about his passion for darts badge collecting. He wrote “I was wondering if you may have badges to swap or sell or if you could put me in contact with people that do. I have been playing for over 30 years and collecting badges for much of that time. The badges are all individually bagged to preserve their condition.” (The image shows Daryl with his extensive collection.) I decided to find out more about Daryl and his collection.



Daryl started playing darts in 1976 and began collecting badges shortly after he received his first 180 badge. Daryl told me, “My wife Sandy says I have a real problem but that really does not bother me as it’s my problem not hers. The only real problem I have is finding more badges that I don’t already have.” Daryl has (at the last count) 649 different badges ranging from 180 badges to club and association badges as well as ones from championships. He also has about 100 badges from ‘the Mark dart or cricket format of

darts' which is apparently played mostly in the USA. (*DDN* American subscribers might like to explain exactly what 'Mark darts' are for me please.)

His favorite badge is his Australian 170 peg club badge. Daryl told me "I threw the 170 Peg in the Victorian state play-offs in 1986 and have not got another one in competition since so it's pretty important to me."

Daryl also has a number of badges that he has more than one example of which he says he would be happy to swap with any *DDN* subscribers who share his passion. If you are interested in swapping badges with Daryl he can be contacted by e-mail at hallams3@bigpond.com.



Although Daryl knows the origin of the majority of his badges, some continue to elude him. Here I feature the Meachers Hotel Darts Club and invite *DDN* readers to help identify exactly where this badge came from. (Please respond direct to Daryl with any information you may have.)

LUNEBURG DARTS

Otto G. e-mailed me recently from Germany to tell me about his 'little darts family' in Luneburg (Luneburger Dart Verband (LDV)). He told me "We have fun all the time" which, of course is *exactly* what darts is all about no matter where you may be in the world. It's a great little local website and I'll be pleased to add it to my Links page in due course. Check it out at www.ldv-ev.de/.

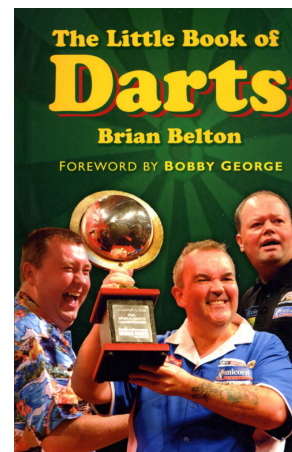
BOOK REVIEWS

Brian Belton, *The Little Book of Darts* (Stroud: The History Press, 2011)

As many *DDN* readers will know, I have often spoken about my planned book *180! Fascinating Darts Facts* and – Who knows? – some day that might still see the light of day but until then we strive to enjoy similar works that authors prepare for our delectation.

I have to admit that I was quite impressed with Matt Bozeat's book *Darts Miscellany* (Pitch Publishing, 2010) which was the first 'modern miscellany', a compendium of more recent darting facts, figures and lists with an occasional look over his shoulder at the star darters of the past.

More recently Brian Belton's work *The Little Book of Darts* (2011) has been published by The History Press and I must admit that this work falls short of my personal expectations.



Designed, like so many books of this type, as a book to dip into at leisure, it is less well organised than Bozeat's work. Subjects (like Players' Nicknames, Heroes and 'Waddellese' (the sayings of Sid Waddell) are bounced around and returned to time and again throughout the work, which I found irritating and confusing. His obvious passion for the feats of Raymond van Barneveld and the TV quiz show 'Bullseye' are blatantly obvious for all to read.

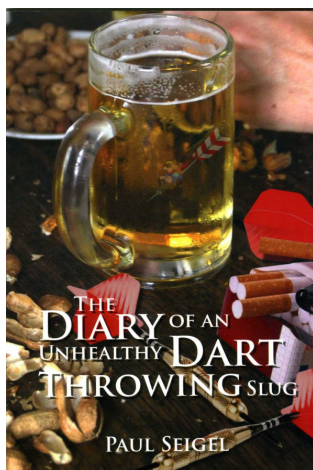
Belton has 'borrowed' quite a lot of historical data especially relating to darts in the 1930s, from my book *Darts in England 1900-1939 – A social history* (Manchester University Press, 2009). My work is in the public domain and thus surely it is a compliment to me that Belton has accessed my work. And how can I possibly criticise him when in his Introduction he actually mentions me, describing me as 'peerless' and devoting more or less an entire paragraph to praising my work and thanking me for my 'precise and honest efforts to provide the sport [*of darts*] with the distinction of rigorous historical research.'

That's fine I suppose but – and I ask this of *anyone* who utilises the facts I have recovered or discovered and interpreted over the past 25 or more years – please, please, *please* get them RIGHT. Page 63 of Belton's work is a prime example. He mentions Brian Gamlin of Bury, Lancashire whose name is most commonly associated with inventing the numbering system on a standard dartboard. He then goes on to say that '...*many* argue that it was in 1913 that Thomas William Buckle gifted the world with its most-used dartboard.' [My italics.] *I* argue and, through my input to his book *Played at the Pub* (2009) Arthur R. Taylor argues but it's only us not *many*.

Belton also states that Gamlin 'might have come up with the Manchester Board'. Whether that was a wild guess I don't know but he certainly did not get that information from me. However, if he had referred to page 157 of my book *Darts in England* he would have discovered that the Manchester Board was in fact the brainchild of a French immigrant Henri Perrigo. Gamlin had nothing to do with that little board and nothing to do with the standard numbering. My belief is that Gamlin never existed and was merely a figment of someone's imagination – and I think I know who.

Paul Seigel, *The Diary of an Unhealthy Dart Throwing Slug* (Bloomington, Indiana: Xlibris, 2011)

Now this is more like it. Highly original – but very short – stuff from Paul Seigel (aka 'Dartoid'). He's done it again. He's gone mad and released another of his literary works on an unsuspecting darting public.



Following quickly in the wake of *The Outrageous and Completely Untrue History of the Sport of Darts* (2010) and his amazing labour of love *The Year 2008 in Darts* (also 2010) comes his latest offering *The Diary of an Unhealthy Dart Throwing Slug*, a 50-page, 31-chaptered diary of a life-long

darts player on a diet of oranges and vegetables! I know it sounds more like a horror story than a tale of lifestyle change but this excursion by Dartoid into the complete unknown made me laugh aloud in places whilst also oftentimes marveling at his persistence and tenacity.

Congratulations Paul on losing 16 pounds. Have you piled them back on again yet or are the oranges and vegetables still on your menu? Please let this doctor know.

STEVE BROWN DARTS ACADEMY (SBDC)

As *DDN* readers are aware my newsletter is not always about darts history: it's also about current darts issues and the future of the sport. As far as the latter is concerned it is already very clear that the growing number of darts academies being set up here in the UK are ensuring that the future of darts is secured by nurturing young talent and preparing them for life in darts' fast lane (if that's what they decide to do).



One of leaders in youth darts today is PDC player Steve 'Bomber' Brown. Steve's achievements include being a Pro tour winner in March last year also having reached two



finals and a semi final. Steve (pictured here with an enthusiastic group of his academy players (Image © Rileys and used with permission)) has qualified for every SKY major televised event in the last two years. For once the writing isn't down to me so I am thrilled that journalist Amanda Thain has contributed the

following article about the Steve Brown Darts Academy (SBDA). Amanda writes:

'The Steve Brown Darts Academy was born in 2010 when Steve Brown's son John wanted to take up the sport. Steve realised there was nowhere for John to play with his peers. Steve advertised for local children to join a darts club in his dad Mark's pub *The Bull* in St George. The response was brilliant and before he knew it Steve was in charge of over 20 youngsters keen to learn the art of darts. The academy was born, a room separate from the pub was arranged for the academy and Steve developed a brand with a unique grading system and practice routines for the students.

Today, after much hard work, Steve has three academies in Bristol, Taunton and Worcester with more due to open this year. The academies are already seeing fantastic results through the hard work and dedication of both coaches and students.

On 2nd January this year the first academy championships were held, students from all three academies competing for the 'Champions Cup'. There were four competitions each based on the current grade of the student. The winners were White grade - Ben Alexander (Bristol) Yellow grade - Josh Barson (Worcester), Green grade - Joe Lee (Worcester) and Blue and above - John Brown (Bristol) who beat Martin Walker from Taunton in a nail biting 3-2 final. Definitely some names to look out for in the future! We all saw some great darts being thrown and made new friends. The students were a credit to the academy, showing great sportsmanship both in victory and defeat.'

Amanda also told me, "We are looking for new venues and coaches for 2012. If anyone is interested please contact me at amanda@sbda.tv." To find out more about the SBDA check out www.stevebrowndartsacademy.co.uk.

Let's hope that all the academies across the country go from strength to strength during 2012 and beyond.

TON, TON-FORTY, TON-EIGHTY

US subscriber Doug J asks:

"Why is a 180, 170, 121, etc said as ton-eighty, ton-seventy and so forth?... another question, but related. Why is anything over a 100 written on the scoreboard as 8T0, 7T0, etc? I've heard British announcers speak it as ton-whatever but never get to see the scoreboard. Just wondering what the origin of 'number T number' structure is." I replied, "That's an interesting point you make about the 'ton'. Part of the answer goes back many decades ago whilst another part is much more recent.

The word 'ton' has been used in darts for ages and has its origin in the use of a beer or wine barrel as an early dartboard. If the round bung-hole of the barrel was hit by a dart it scored 100: like a bull's-eye did in archery. Another name for the barrel was 'tun'; the score and the word were linked and then the latter distorted over time to 'ton'. Thus one of the words for a score of 100 in darts is 'ton' and from that, in more recent times, darts players and, especially darts TV commentators and pundits, have used ton-forty, ton-sixty, etc as abbreviated talk for one hundred and forty, one hundred and sixty, etc."

Always looking to promote my books I told Doug, "I published a book in 2011 with England darts player Bobby George called *Scoring for show, Doubles for Dough – Bobby George's Darts Lingo* (a darts dictionary) which covers the point you have raised and also includes the word 'century' which is also used in some areas of Britain to describe a score of 100 but, clearly, it is nowhere near as popular as 'ton'." (Doug told me that the book was already on his Christmas list.)

I sought clarification from Doug about '8T0' etc and he replied, "Over here in the states, I've only seen it as 8T0, 7T0 etc. And actually, the 8 and 0, 7 and 0, etc are under the cross of the 'T' with one number on each side of the descender. Looks kind of interesting, but for a newer player like me, makes the math a little more difficult."

To be honest I've never seen a ton-seventy or a ton-eighty represented on a darts scoreboard here in the UK as '7T0' or '8T0' (the 'T' standing for 'ton'). I know a few friends of mine who play darts who would be confused by it. What do others think? Have *you* seen '7T0' etc chalked on your scoreboard? Is it standard practice where you are? E-mail me via the Contact page of my website www.patrickchaplin.com with your views.

DARTS ON THE OCEAN WAVE

Dave J. has written to me asking me to help him identify what year the darts shown in the image might be from. Eventually between the two of us (and with assistance from my good friend and *DDN* subscriber Dave B) we found that the ship named on the box, 'R.M.S. Samaria', (pictured)



was a Cunard liner launched at the Cammell Laird shipyard in 1920. Its maiden voyage was on 19th April 1922 from Liverpool to Boston, a route that was later extended to include New York. The ship was extensively used for cruising and was converted into a troopship in 1939.



CUNARD WHITE STAR S.S. "SAMARIA."

It is my view that the darts were awarded either for a crew darts league or, more likely, to passengers who played in a darts competition on board during their passage on the cruise liner. As for the age of the darts, my contact at Unicorn told me that whilst it is not possible to identify the *exact* year of manufacture the darts shown were sold by the company

continuously for more than 10 years and in his view the earliest they could be is 1950.

Interestingly R.M.S. Samaria was only returned to Cunard after the war in 1950 but then had to undergo a full overhaul which meant that it did not return to service as a cruise liner until 1951. R.M.S. Samaria's last voyage was in December, 1955, the ship being sold for scrap the following year. This means that we can now confidently date the set of darts as between 1951 and 1955.

DDN IN CHINA

It's great to know that there are friends in darts around the world who are promoting our sport, enabling it to flourish across the globe. In China there is much positive work being undertaken by the China Darts Federation (CDF).

I am very pleased to say that *DDN* is helping in some small way to promote the sport in that vast country. Alex H. of the CDF subscribes to *DDN* then translates the newsletter into Chinese and forwards it to darts fans. On the subject of the Chinese darters reading books about the sport Alex told me, "I think that we are about a year to eighteen months or so away from the stage of getting players interested in reading darts books as the foreign players are not well known here at present. I am hoping that your newsletters and the copies of *Darts World* that I have received may help with this. Our current primary objective is to get darts officially recognised here."

Thanks Alex. Perhaps when that time comes a translation of my book *The Official Bar Guide to Darts* might be welcomed. Regards too to Harith T. who is also undertaking great work in China to ensure that darts is recognised there as a sport.

AND FINALLY...

While recently delving into my extensive darts photographic archive I came across this fabulous image of a man named Eric Marchington seen here with what appears to be a very extensive collection of darts newspaper cuttings. There is no indication of the date the image was taken or where. The only clue is that the photographer who took the picture was based in Audenshaw, which is in the Metropolitan Borough of Tameside, Greater Manchester.

I would very much like to learn more about Eric and



his collection of darts ephemera. Let's all hope that, if Eric is no longer with us, his cuttings books found their way to either a serious darts enthusiast or, better still, to a local library or archive.

COMING UP IN ISSUE 23

I did make a New Year's resolution *not* to tell *DDN* subscribers what's coming up in the next issue because so often I have to hold things over. However, that resolution, like so many others has been broken, so here goes... In Issue 23 I will be including

- An exclusive chat with Mike Gregory
- Details of the annual John 'Dartboard' Westwood Memorial Darts Tournament
- Can you help solve the mystery of the 'Three Maidens'?
- Dr. Darts' theories on the development of the 'standard' flight

'til next time...

Best wishes,

PATRICK

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