

DR. DARTS' NEWSLETTER

Issue 27 July 2012



INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Issue 27. I hope I find you all well and enjoying your darts.



I'm not. My frozen shoulder continues to cause me aggravation meaning that I haven't been able to throw a dart for more than six months but I am now being treated by an osteopath and things seem to be improving.

I've received excellent responses to the special issue #26 which featured the First UK Home International. (My thanks again to Eddie Norman for his help with the article and to Arthur Hook for checking out the details of the Irish contingent.)

At some stage in the future I'll be featuring the story of the WINMAU

World Masters so if you have any memories of that tournament from the early days please drop me a line. (And talking of the WINMAU, the image shows the Women's 1985 World Master, New Zealand's Lilian Barnett with 'Big Cliff Lazarenko. (Copyright holder not known. Image courtesy of PC/DW Archive))

Talking of the ladies, in this issue I'll be featuring the newly-established Ladies Darts Organisation (LDO). Some of you may have read about the LDO in *Inside Darts* but in this *DDN* I will bring everyone up to date with developments within that organisation.

FROM PREVIOUS ISSUES

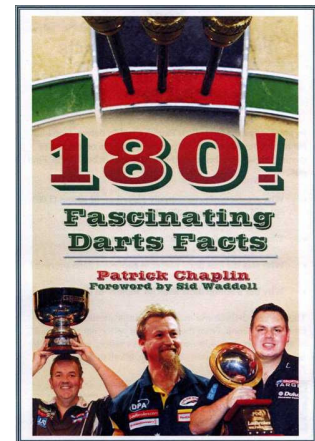
(a) Books

Confirmation has been received from both of my publishers that *Darts in England 1900-39 – A social history* and my new work *180! Fascinating Darts Facts* will be published this coming November.

Regular readers will know that *Darts in England* is the book based on my PhD and was originally published by Manchester University Press in 2009 and, due to the short print

run common in academic book publishing, the cost of the hardback was (and still is) £55. (I recently saw copies on the internet in excess of £90!) The good news is that the softback version due to hit the bookshelves in November will cost only **£15.99** (sterling) so a great opportunity for *all* darts fans to afford my 'life's work'. Copies can be pre-ordered by going to www.manchesteruniversitypress.co.uk.

My new book, *180! Fascinating Darts Facts* will be published on **1st November** by The History Press. It is packed full of trivia the majority of which will be new to darts fans. Sid Waddell has graciously written the Foreword and has dubbed me the 'Herodotus of Darts'. (I confess I had to look that up too.) *180!* will cost a mere £7.99 and can be pre-ordered from www.thehistorypress.co.uk, www.amazon.co.uk or by phone at (0)1235 465577.



Finally, signed copies of my 2010 book *The Official Bar Guide to Darts* can now be obtained on the 'net direct from my local bookshop All Books via www.abebooks.co.uk at £6.99 (plus postage and packing).

(b) Website

I've still a few issues to resolve relating to my new website but I am hoping that it will come on line by the end of this month. I'm sure I've lost a lot of subscribers to *DDN* while the 'subscribe' feature has been off line but hopefully folks will join in large numbers again once the new website is finally sorted.

Despite this I'm still receiving some positive feedback on the existing website which includes this comment from 'JD' from the USA. He writes:

'Fantastic darts resource you have here! Thanks for your hard work - from a darts enthusiast here in the States.'

If he had left his e-mail address I'd've invited 'JD' to subscribe to *DDN*.

(c) Feedback

Mick S. continues to enjoy *DDN*. He writes 'Great read. Plenty of unknown facts. [*Mick, wait until you read 180!*] Well done Patrick... Tell me one other person who writes such great facts about the sport I and millions of other people love. Knew it! You can't can you? That is one of the reasons I really enjoy your *DDN*. Keep going Patrick please.'

Mick must have heard that I was thinking recently of packing in darts research for good. It's a feeling that I hope will pass.

Mick added, 'Tell me Patrick. Do you throw darts as well as you write? If yes then you should be a pro on the circuit.' My answer is 'No. Sorry Mick. I'm just a humble pub player who enjoys his darts when he can.'

(d) *Inside Darts*

News may have reached you that the new darts magazine *Inside Darts* has been experiencing some problems resulting in production ceasing albeit apparently temporarily with the May issue. Fortunately, according to the editor Chris Haill, those problems have now been resolved and the magazine will be re-launched in September. Hopefully I'll have more news on this in the August issue.

(e) *DDN BY POST*

I've received a few enquiries about whether or not *DDN* is available in hard copy which can be posted to anywhere in the world. I'm sorry to say that until I set up a PayPal account I can only make this service available to readers in the UK. The cost for one year's subscription in the UK (11 issues of *DDN*) is currently £35 (including postage and packing). Anyone else interested in receiving *DDN* by post should contact me via the Contacts page of my website www.patrickchaplin.com.

ENGLISH HERITAGE - *PLAYED IN LONDON*

Earlier this year I was invited by English Heritage to be interviewed by Simon Inglis, editor of the EH's prestigious series of 'Played in...' books. Simon had been organising and presenting a series of talks and interviews at The Gallery, Farringdon, London running up to the Olympics but primarily to promote the forthcoming book *Played in London*.

On 31st May my good friend Arthur R. Taylor (the world's greatest pub games historian) took part in *Trebles and Floorers – The Real London Games* at The Gallery; 'trebles' of course being a reference to darts and 'floorers' to the game of skittles. Arthur and I were interviewed for about 30 minutes each plus of course there were plenty of questions from the audience at the end. (The image (© English Heritage/Simon Inglis) shows Arthur and me in front of part of the EH exhibition featuring pub games.)

Although darts is still commonplace in the capital there remains only one skittle alley in London at the *Freemasons Arms*, Hampstead. It was good to see the landlord of the pub there not only to listen to Arthur but also encourage those present to sign up to playing or at least to visit the *Freemasons Arms* and witness the game being played.



I was thrilled to meet Justin Irwin (the ‘Bachelor of Darts’) for the first time and his colleague ‘Tricky ‘D’’ (they of ‘The Wrong Bed’ fame) at the event. If anyone is ever in the capital and looking for a game of darts I strongly recommend that you visit Justin’s website <http://www.justinirwin.com/london-darts-pubs>). This site will also tell you where you can find the London Fives Board still in play.

Also amongst the appreciative audience was *DDN* subscriber and editor of the Pub History Society (PHS) *Newsletter* Chris Murray. I hadn’t spoken to Chris for a while so it was good to have a little time to catch up. I know Chris well because I am also a member of the PHS and write regularly for that society’s *Newsletter*. Anyone interested in joining the society can find details at www.pubhistorysociety.co.uk.

When the interview and chats were over the evening was not finished as I was then interviewed by Julia Prosinger (pictured) (Image © 2012 Moppix) a reporter for the



German national newspaper *Der Tagesspiegel*. Julia wanted to talk to me about my work and insisted that we hold the interview in ‘a real English pub’. Justin had recommended (among others) the *Porters’ Lodge* in Arthur Street, East London, not far from The Monument.

On arriving there Roger Spencer, a Director of the City of London Darts Association (CoLDA), welcomed us with open arms (even though he had a private, corporate darts night in progress) and we spent more than a couple of

happy hours there. My wife Maureen and I retired to our hotel well after midnight which is late enough for us old folk. All-in-all a great day for me and, I hope, for darts.

I’m hoping to be able to feature more about CoLDA in a future issue of *DDN*.

LADIES DARTS ORGANISATION (LDO)

In 1994, when asked what he thought of ladies’ darts, Sid Waddell replied, “It’s like watching paint dry”. However, he changed his mind a few years later when he read Trina Gulliver’s autobiography *Golden Girl* and reflected on the extent to which the ladies’ game had improved.

But despite the likes of Trina Gulliver, Deta Hedman and Anastasia Dobromyslova proving time and again that women can play well and, in Anastasia’s case in particular, mix it with the men, for many Sid’s earlier comment remains the archetypal view of how outsiders (and even some insiders) perceive ladies’ darts.

In many cases the girls struggle to manage playing darts having other responsibilities and priorities. Sponsors tend to be few and far between as there is little or no chance of the ladies paying anything back to their sponsors by way of TV exposure except for the lucky few. As a direct result of this women's prize money is embarrassingly poor compared with the men's game.

But at Lakeside last January some of the ladies took matters into their own hands to fight for more women's darts on television and for more direct involvement in and control of their own futures.

Julie Lambie, Secretary and player for Lincolnshire County darts, working with Sussex County player Luci Cunningham, organised an on-line petition regarding the lack of TV coverage for the ladies' game. This was supported at Lakeside by a number of top lady players including Deta Hedman (pictured with Julie). Julie believes that, as a direct result of the petition, cable TV channel ESPN agreed to allow the Lakeside Women's World Professional Darts Championship final to be shown on the red button.

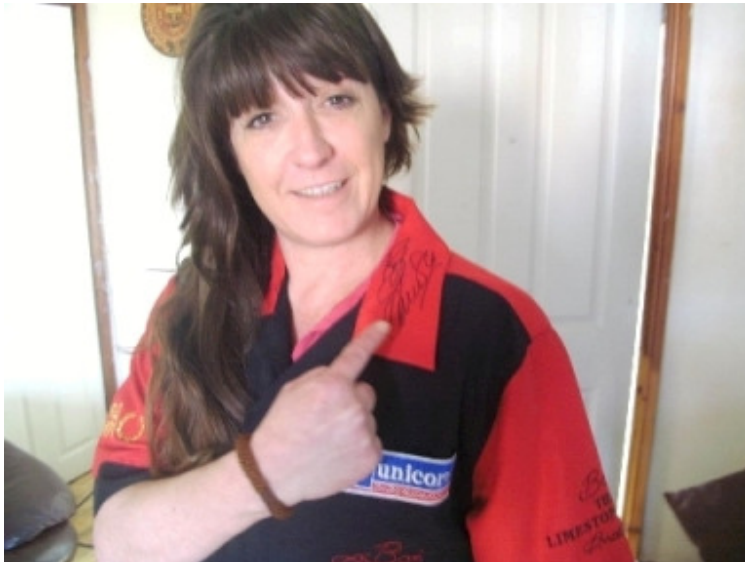


Spurred on by the success of the petition, a team of ladies led by Julie continued to champion their cause by creating an organisation totally devoted to the ladies' game; the Ladies Darts Organisation (LDO). Star players like Deta, Lorraine Farlam, Rhian Edwards and Linda Jones came on board more or less straightaway with more joining every month. In addition, the LDO teamed up with the England Darts Organisation (EDO) to help promote the ladies' presence in the England Grosvenor Grand Prix of Darts and to assist in enhancing their overall presence in the sport.

A website www.ladiesdartsorganisation.com has been set up plus a Facebook group called 'Ladies Darts'. This enables female darts players from all over the country and around the world to share their news and views and ask questions. Julie told me recently that the ladies group on Facebook continues to grow week by week with new members joining more or less every day.

Earlier this year Julie told me, “The ladies have asked for a major new tournament so I’m giving it to them.” Here she is referring to the ‘Ladies’ Classic’ to be held at Riley’s in Crofton Road, Lincoln on 15th September this year. As regards sponsorship for the Classic Julie told me, “This has been gained in double-quick time with fantastic support from many companies and darting professionals.” Last week Julie said, “We have achieved our goal and now have all the prize money (£2,240) together for the Ladies’ Singles through generous sponsorship and donated darts items auctioned on our website. We have also had entries forms printed off and these are being handed out all over the UK. I have set up online banking for ladies to enter online.”

More good news is that the Classic is generating interest from lady darters across the globe. Julie told me, “We have ladies from Sweden (two of them being Swedish internationals), the USA and The Netherlands who are interested.” Support for the event is also coming from the men, some of whom are volunteering to come and chalk the first rounds of games at the event. However, Julie says that more are needed so, if you can assist, please contact Julie via the LDO website.



Players and fans have also provided items for auction to raise funds. These include Bob Anderson donating his signed darts shirt which Julie is pictured here wearing. Currently under auction on the LDO website is a Phil Taylor shirt and one of the next items to feature will be a ‘Trina Gulliver nine-time world champ shirt.’

Julie has also given consideration to LDO

promotional goods and already an aluminium darts case with the LDO logo etched on it is being produced by Red Dragon Darts. In addition, Sally Haines of Designs by Sazz is designing LDO shirts. Julie said, “Both of these products are going to be available for the public to buy with royalties going to the LDO.”

Within less than six months the LDO has made great strides in promoting the ladies’ game so thankfully there seems little chance of this organisation failing like the ill-fated Ladies Darts *Association* a few years back.

I wish Julie and all those associated in any way to the LDO continuing success in raising the profile, improving opportunities and increasing the prize money in the ladies’ game. Congratulations to Julie and all those associated with the LDO in any way.

[The above article is a revised and updated version of a piece of mine that originally appeared in the May issue of Inside Darts magazine.]

BOOK REVIEW

I've never heard of 'Silas Singer' but you have to admire his creativity (or maybe his nerve) in producing a new darts book by merely cutting and pasting 'High quality' (his words, not mine) data from Wikipedia, adding some sub-headings then putting it all into book form (apparently without any editing) utilising a cover image culled under the 'Creative Commons License' and calling the end product *The History of Darts and Professional Play*.

It's a jumble of a book and is wracked with errors. Much of the information is already out of date and the history section is very thin.

The 'author' states on the back cover blurb that 'The book you are holding in your hands utilizes the unique characteristics of the Internet – relying on web infrastructure and collaborative tools to share and use resources in keeping with the characteristics of the medium (user-created, defying control, etc) – while maintaining *[sic]* all the convenience and utility of a real book.'

To me, for all that philosophising, it's still only Wikipedia stuff cut and pasted into book form.

[I am indebted to my very good friend Glen H. from Seattle for bringing this rather unusual darts book to my attention.]

DARTITIS

Kevin H. from Lubbock, Texas, who featured in the Introduction of *DDN* #26, has written, "I would love to hear any input you could provide about your experiences with dartitis and those that have battled through it. I know Eric Bristow battled it in the 80s and Mark Walsh has bounced back from it recently but there is little published on the strategies and techniques they used to conquer. I value the opinion of those that have closely followed this sport and would appreciate any insight you could provide."

I did, in fact, suffer from the condition in the 1980s and cured it by changing my stance and swapping the strong cider I was drinking for real ale but that won't necessarily work for everyone. The best I can do, and I mentioned this in my reply to Kevin, is to refer those interested to the 'Dartitis' section of my website. This includes not only more



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QUALITY WIKIPEDIA ARTICLES



details of how I fought the condition but also, and more importantly, it features an excellent article by Bob Johnson (pictured), an ex-pat living in Cyprus and playing his darts in the Larnaca Friendly Darts League, about the condition. To learn more simply go to www.patrickchaplin.com/Dartitis.htm.)

Perhaps some *DDN* readers have experience of dartitis which they would like to share with us all. If so, please write to me via the 'Contact' page of my website.

I look forward to hearing from you.

A CLUTCH OF PROGRAMMES...AND MUCH MORE

A few weeks ago subscriber Bill B. wrote to tell me about thirteen 'really interesting' darts programmes that he had recently purchased. All dated between 1947 and 1949 they comprise some of the most fascinating darts programmes I have ever seen gathered together in one place.

Bill, 38 from the UK, (pictured here with his daughter Emily (Image © Bill Bell) took up playing darts about four years ago when he and a few friends gave up football. Bill and his friends play in the local league, and Bill's darts of choice are a set from Red Dragon. He started collecting darts memorabilia almost immediately after giving up football. Bill told me, "I began collecting after discovering all the vintage sets of darts from the 40's and 50's. I started playing with Jim Pike darts and would try out all the different types I'd buy, including war-time Dorwin darts, Gameshot and Unicorn 'Dum Dums'." Bill's favourite darts are all housed in a display case; the collection also including the Bisset scorer, old dartboards, programmes and other darts ephemera. Bill added, "I've got nine out of the ten Unicorn 'Half Pint' darts!

As for the clutch of programmes Bill told me, "One has a match between Jim Pike, Johnny Ross and two archers. The archers played from much further back than the darts



players and on a larger board.” Another programme features a match between ‘Heavyweights’ (weighing 14 stone and over) and ‘Midgets’ (five feet tall and shorter). Not very politically correct today but folks never worried much about such issues back then.

Bill then confirmed that the main reason he bought the programmes was for the one featuring the match between Jim Pike and Joe Hitchcock held on 20th September 1947 at the Royal Horticultural Hall, London. This was the second time these darting legends had met to decide the unofficial ‘world’ darts title. Joe Hitchcock had won the first title match against Pike at the Acton Town Hall on 2nd September 1946 and reigned supreme again in the 1947 challenge.

Bill says that he is ‘well chuffed’ with his new acquisitions and rightly so. He was good enough to send me scans of some of the programmes and I have to say that describing them as ‘really interesting’ doesn’t even come near. What Bill has are thirteen perfect slices of darts history relating to some of the greatest darts players of the 1940s.

[Thanks to Bill for contacting me and providing me with details of the programmes. If any readers have any interesting pieces of darts memorabilia that you’d like to tell me and hundreds of fellow subscribers about please contact me.]

NEWS OF THE WORLD – DOUBLE IN/DOUBLE OUT?

Mark V. from San Diego, California, recently wrote to me as follows:

‘Patrick, I know the *News of the World* was best of three but was it ever a double-on, double-out format? A friend keeps insisting that it was a double-on format but in the videos I have seen of the old competitions, it was straight-on, double-out 501.’

I informed Mark that I have no record of the *News of the World* Individual Darts Championship ever being played to a double in, double out format. The straight start, double out was certainly used in all grand finals post-World War Two

However, I informed Mark that my research has shown that in the 1930s and 1940s early stages of the competition (the ‘house’ rounds) were allowed to be played to ‘local’ rules (such as playing on the Manchester (‘log end’) or the Yorkshire (no trebles, no outer bull) dartboards. Thus there may *possibly* have been early matches played ‘double in, double out’ at that stage of the tournament. However, as far as I know, that rule has never been part of the formal rules of the latter stages (Divisional or Grand Finals) of the *News of the World*.

HOMework

My good friend Patrick Dee, 'The Curator of Darts' (who was featured in an earlier issue of *DDN*) has contacted me to say that he has had a **Crafton Solid Rubber Dartboard** donated to his archive.

Now I've heard of dartboards being made out of paper, clay (both Plasticine® and the early NODOR dartboards) and even constructed from gum in Australia in the 1930s. I also know that the Dunlop company made dartboards (but not made out of rubber) but I've never heard of or seen, until now, a *rubber* dartboard, (pictured, image © 2012 Paul Dee).



Patrick told me, "The darts actually do stick in. I've tried it and have yet to have a single bounce out." He also told me that there is no patent number or any other information on either the front or the reverse of the board. So I have a challenge for you. What can anyone out there tell me about the Crafton Solid Rubber Dartboard?

If you have any information about this rather unique dartboard then please write to me via the Contacts page of my website www.patrickchaplin.com.

COMING UP IN ISSUE 28

Top story next month will be 'The Dart Dollies', an article written Judy E. Sharp the former Marketing Manager for Halex Sports who managed this glamorous group of lady darts players back in the late 1970s/early 1980s.

So, that's it for *DDN* # 27. I hope you've enjoyed this issue. Cheers!

Patrick

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