



DR DARTS' NEWSLETTER

Issue Three – May 2010

Introduction

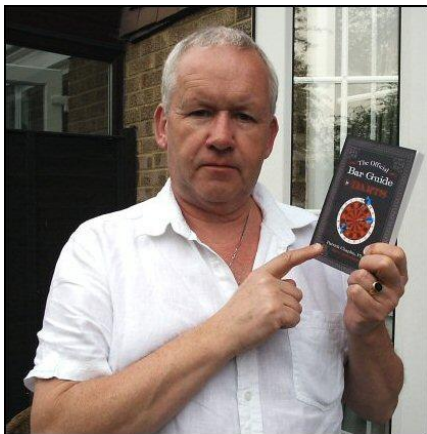
With more and more subscribers coming on board and positive feedback being received I am pleased to announce the arrival of Issue Three.

Since the last *Newsletter* I've been desk-bound undertaking general research and working on commissioned articles for *We Love Darts*. The editor has asked me to write a regular history column for the magazine; something I've been aching to do for years. As you may know I also continue to write occasional articles for *Darts World* magazine over here in the UK and for *Bull's-Eye News* in the USA. (I try to spread the word of darts in as many ways that I can.)

Despite being (metaphorically) tied to my desk that has not prevented me from compiling what I hope is another interesting *Newsletter*.

From Issue Two

(a) The Official Bar Guide to Darts - Update



The Official Bar Guide photo 'Moppix'

At the time of writing, review copies of *The Official Bar Guide to Darts* have been issued and the book will be available to purchase by darts fans in the USA from the beginning of May and the UK in June. (You can order copies over the internet from Amazon.com and Amazon.co.uk.) I recently received my author's copies and I include here an image of yours truly with the book.

(b) April Fool reaction

I'm not sure if all countries around the world have such a crazy tradition as April Fools Day but my hoax report about horsehair dartboards seems to have appealed to a lot of you. Subscriber Dave B joined in, replying,



“Now then Patrick, another fabulous newsletter, lots of interest etc and brilliant reading...I was particularly interested that the Ulting University gets a mention at last. I studied there from 1949 to 1981 and got a degree in Advanced Wellie-Throwing across the river, so was very pleased that it made a place in the horsehair theory. Of course if you study the photographs from the early medieval period you can see that the horses are in fact very bald indeed.”

Dave, you're as daft as me.

Before we leave April Fools, if you haven't read it yet, visit Dartoid's website www.dartoidsworld.com, go to 'Dartoid's Archive' article #387 and read Paul Seigel's magnificent hoax report 'It is true. There is video!'

(c) Trina Gulliver



Congratulations to Chris M who spotted an error in this section of Issue Two relating to Trina's fellow guests on a forthcoming edition of BBC TV's *A Question of Sport*. England (as the rest of the world is probably aware) is a nation of football fanatics and Chris is no exception. He wrote 'It's Dean Ashton in the Question of Sport item not Aston – he used to play for my beloved West Ham United...until cruel injury put paid to that - and a budding England career.' I'm glad to put the record straight Chris.

By the way, I *am* the exception, having no interest in football whatsoever.

I'm sure Trina (pictured here after winning her eighth world title (photo courtesy of Yvonne Andrews)) will give a good account of herself when she appears on the programme on Friday 28th May at 7.30 p.m. and I am sure many of her fans will tune in.

On the same subject Eddie Norman, who used to manage the late Welsh darts genius Leighton Rees, contacted me following Issue Two and said that Trina appearing on *A Question of Sport* brought back some memories for him when Leighton was invited to appear on the programme. Eddie told me, "I went to *A Question of Sport* many years ago with Leighton Rees who was appearing on it with, amongst others, boxer John Conteh and golfer Nick Faldo. I remember that Nick came up to us and said how privileged he was to meet Leighton. Leighton felt humbled, it was a great day, so I expect Trina also had a great day."

I'll have more about the late, great Leighton Rees later in this *Newsletter*.

(d) American cricket

In Issue Two I came up with some theories about how dart players in the USA ever ended up with a darts game called 'Cricket'. It seems that Cricket (more popularly known as 'Tactics' in the UK) is played more enthusiastically and more often over there than 501. Needless to say I was thrilled to receive two responses adding to the mix.

The first was from writer and author Mat Coward who told me:

It's often forgotten that cricket was the national sport of north America for a long time - certainly long enough for some of its terms to have entered the language (and subsequently lingered). In fact, there's a surprising amount of cricket played over there even now. I think it tends to be invisible, simply because in the US...it's not (over there) a big money game (so no TV coverage).

The second response was from Jay Tomlinson, editor of *Bull's-Eye News*, with his own theory. He wrote:

I just finished reading your *Newsletter* and got a kick out of the Cricket theories. My take is that your initial thought is correct in that US military persons stationed in England played both darts (tactics) and cricket. I don't believe when they returned they confused the name of the game though. I believe that the American dart game is called Cricket because it has a bit of similar nomenclature.

I have often heard the term 'innings' referred to in darts as the needs to close the six numbers and the bull's-eye. For instance, there are seven innings in cricket. There are three 'marks' needs to close a number in cricket (tactics) and there are three stumps to a wicket in cricket. There are other similar comparisons to the terms used as scoring, outs, etc, but it's still a bit of a stretch.

Bottom line, you're right, most Americans haven't a clue how English Cricket is played!

Thanks for the smiles!

Cheers Jay and Mat...and if anyone else has any theories as to how an American dart game came to be called after a very English field sport just drop me a line.





And for anyone who wants to take their games of cricket more seriously why not seek out current and back issues of Jay's publication *Bull's-Eye News* where he is currently re-running US darter Tony Payne's excellent series 'Thermo-Nuclear Cricket'.

(e) New Zealand broadcast

The darts piece I recorded a while back for Radio New Zealand National was featured on the *This Way Up* programme on the morning of Saturday 20 March. Simon Morton (the show host) and Richard Scott (producer) kindly sent me a CD of the interview. Anyone interested in listening to the broadcast might still be able to listen back on the website <http://www.radionz.co.nz/thiswayup>.

Newsletter translation

Given that *Dr. Darts' Newsletter* now reaches across the globe, it is not surprising that I have recently been asked if I could make it available in other languages. Given the time it takes me to compile the *Newsletter* and the pressure of other work I regret that this will not be possible.

Robbie Green's amazing average

Amazing. In March Cheshire player Robbie Green (runner-up in the 2009 WINMAU World Masters) hit what is believed to be the highest ever county average of 42.94. I did try and have this verified by the BDO but they were unable to confirm this to be the case but read on...

While I was wondering how I could find out, I received an e-mail from John Phillips (the official webmaster and a county referee for Glamorgan since 2008) who had heard that Peter Johns of Gwent had hit the *exact same average* some years before when playing for his county. I thought "Surely not".

But it's true.

I then consulted Dennis Cake, organiser at Gwent County who informed me that on Sunday 3rd March 2002 Gwent played Leicestershire at Hafodyrynys RFC Sports &



Welfare Club Gwent. Peter Johns played Jez Porter winning 3-0 with an average of 42.94 per dart.

Darts World (April 2002) reported that the county record was 'smashed twice in one day' in March 2002 when Mervyn King hit a new record of 40.62 whilst playing for Cambridgeshire against Warwickshire on 3rd March only to find out that it had indeed been topped by Peter Johns on the same day!

In that same report it was confirmed that the previous record for the highest county average up until then had been 38.54 set by Somerset county's George Turnbull. Thanks to Mike Stephenson of Somerset County darts for checking his records and telling me that George's record was set way back on 1st March 1997 during an away match against Cheshire.

Performance Analysis in darts



Anthony Urmston-Toft with PDC Chief Executive Alan Warriner-Little (Image: Paul Gillings)

It seems to me that, more and more, darts is being regarded as a serious subject for academic research. Hampshire-based Paul Gillings has a Masters degree in the Performance Analysis of Sport and based his main piece of coursework on darts, with particular reference to looking at what other professional sportsmen do to enhance their performance and to consider if these areas could also be applied to darts.

Following his success Paul has set up a sport science consultancy business to put his research to good use and to try to assist dart players in reaching their full potential. He already has his first client, Anthony Urmston-Toft, 25, who is in his first year as a PDC professional and is based in Manchester. Paul spotted Anthony playing in the PDC tournament in Swindon in February against Nigel Heydon. Nigel won 6:3 but Paul noticed from Anthony's scoring that he showed potential but appeared very nervous.



The following week after meeting in Manchester the night before the Derby PDC event, Paul and Anthony agreed a deal to work together. They have tried out some of Paul's research ideas and he also gives Anthony feedback on each of his matches and his averages. The first signs of Anthony's potential surfaced in Crawley in March where he beat Premier League star, Ronnie Baxter as well as Kevin Dowling. The £300 winnings from that tournament means that Anthony is now listed on the Order of Merit and has made his first steps towards qualifying for some of the high profile TV events. For more information and updates on Anthony's progress visit www.inthemadhouse.com.

I was very happy to advise Paul during the early part of his research, as indeed I have assisted other students in the past from undergraduates to PhD level and hope to continue to do so in future. There is truly some amazing work being carried out at university level relating to darts around the globe.

Leighton Rees

Most darts fans know that Wales' Leighton Rees was the winner of the inaugural Embassy World Professional Darts Championship in 1978 beating England's John Lowe 11 legs to 7 in the final. Indeed it is one of the major darts-related regrets of my life that I never met the 'Gentleman of Darts'.



'Image courtesy of WINMAU'

My sponsors (WINMAU) recently sent me an image of the British Airways 'Concorde Trophy' presented to Leighton which bore the legend 'Embassy World Professional Darts Championship 1978'. I was unaware of the existence of such a trophy, which is thankfully still in the possession of Leighton's son Ryan, so I set about finding out what I could about it.

In the March 1978 issue of *Darts World* (page 26) I found the report on Leighton's win in the inaugural Embassy World Professional Darts Championships. Although of course the 'name' sponsor was Embassy (Imperial Tobacco) the Concorde Trophy was an additional trophy awarded during the World Championships, it appears, for the best performance. The *Darts World* report states that:

'A superb ten-dart finish of 137, 180, 180, 4 game shot, earned Leighton the specially designed Concorde Trophy from British Airways and a place in the record books.'

An amazing achievement.

At the time Leighton told a *Darts World* reporter that he always bet on himself. He said, “I always have £25 or £50 on myself every time I play.” He also split his £3,000 winner’s prize money for the World Championship with his great friend and fellow Welsh darts star Alan Evans. Leighton added, “We always share the prize if one of us wins a big competition.” This splitting of prize money was established practice in darts back then. It still occurs today but to a much lesser extent.

Happy Belated Twentieth Anniversary – Paul Lim

501-the perfect 9 dart finish
Golden unicorn
the perfect darts
PAUL LIM – the golden player
7 x Treble 20
1 x Treble 19
1 x Double 12
9 Darts = 501

Darting History
Paul Lim – USA No. 1 Player made darting history when he threw the first ever perfect 501 game in the Embassy World Professional Championship 1990 winning a fabulous £52,000 bonus!

Paul uses Unicorn Golden Titanium-Tungsten darts for greater accuracy, exclusive features, consistent performance and total reliability.

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Unicorn advert celebrating Paul Lim's nine-darter. (Image reproduced courtesy of Unicorn)

Having made quite a fuss last October on my website (and elsewhere) about the 25th anniversary of first televised nine-darter achieved by John Lowe in the MFI World Matchplay at Slough in October 2009, it is unforgiveable that I should then go and forget the 20th anniversary of Paul Lim's celebrated nine-darter.

Of course it was in the second round of the 1990 Embassy World Championships at Lakeside that Singapore-born professional darter Lim, playing Irish darting stalwart Jack McKenna, hit the first-ever nine-darter in the history of the tournament. The feat left Paul 'frightened and jittery' but presumably the £52,000 made him feel better. Happy (belated) Anniversary Paul!



Holiday time

It is spring here in the UK and our thoughts (as elsewhere) turn to holidays/vacations. If you are heading for the Greek island of Zante I have a recommendation for you.



Ex-pat Charlie Pattinson who has lived on Zante for a number of years contacted me a while back to draw my attention to the vibrant darts scene on the island. Charlie lives in Ano Gerakari about a mile and a half from the Valais Hotel and bar where in Alykanas where he plays darts. Then, spookily within days of contacting me, I received a phone call from ex-England international Doug McCarthy asking if I knew if there was a darts scene on Zante as he was soon to holiday there. (Doug has been subject of one of my ‘Where are they now?’ articles which feature on my website.)

So I passed on Charlie’s details to Doug and they arranged to meet at the Valais Hotel and play a few games of 501. Unfortunately Doug’s time there was limited but Charlie told me that it was a pleasure to meet Doug and that there were some really good darts thrown that evening; Charlie even beating Doug in their first game. Some fellow darters from the neighbouring island of Kefalonia had joined Charlie and Doug and last I heard Charlie was deep in discussions with his visitors about arrangements for a ‘home and away’ competition between darters from the two islands.

The accompanying photograph shows players (left to right) Roy Fox, Tony Button, Katrina Valais, Doug McCarthy, Ray Benson and Charlie Pattinson.



Nepal Darts Association – Wheelchair darts

Visitors to my website will know that I have written about the thriving darts scene in Nepal and about Dinesh Thapa, Secretary General of the progressive Nepal Darts Association. Dinesh recently announced that the NDA are now providing training for disabled darts players who are confined to wheelchairs. On the Association's website Dinesh said that they have “started training darts among the wheelchair people in order to promote darts among wheelchair people and differently able people”, adding “We will provide free training for the players in wheelchairs and we will conduct a Wheelchair Darts Championship among such players soon.”



This is the first time in Nepal that such an initiative has been tried and it shows how proactive the NDA is being in encouraging disabled people to be trained in playing darts. I hope to be able to bring you news of the wheelchair championship in a forthcoming issue of the *Newsletter*.

(Thanks to Wayne Ackray (one of my darting friends in Australia) for bringing this fascinating story to my attention.)

Goodbye to Della and Helen

The US darts scene has been stunned recently with the shock news of the loss of two of the country's most well-known ladies of darts. Della Fleetwood and her late husband Tom (who died in 2004) were at the very heart of the development of darts in the USA

from the 1960s onwards. Sandi Cain, past President of the American Darts Organization writing in the March/April issue of *Bull's-Eye News* correctly sums up Della and her husband's contribution to US darts history when she says "Without Tom and Della Fleetwood, there may never have been a national darts organization in the USA" adding that Della 'leaves a legacy of high standards and expectations to the rest of us here on earth.'

On 20th April the US lost one of its seemingly indestructible lady darters, Helen Scheerbaum. In announcing her passing US darts expert George Silberzahn (a long-time friend of the Philadelphia-based darter) said on his website, "No comments can be adequate for recognizing her person, standing and contribution to our game." Check out George's website at www.howtodarts.com/legends-speak-to-us/scheerbaum-helen for Helen's life in darts in her own words originally published back in 2004 and also take a look at www.dartoidsworld.com, (column number 388) for Paul Seigel's personal memories of this incredible darter.

Sponsors News

At the time of issuing this e-mail I have still not received details of the venue for the 2010 WINMAU World Masters but rest assured I will let you know as soon as I can.

Latest news from WINMAU relates to the launch the Mervyn King match-weighted series of 90% tungsten darts. 'The King's' darts are 'uniquely scalloped' to provide 'a superb level of grip' and are available in three weights in standard tungsten or a 'titanium nitride coating'; Mervyn using the 22g version.

Full details of Mervyn's darts and other great WINMAU products can be found at www.winmau.com

Next issue

That's it for Issue Three. I hope you've enjoyed it. As usual feedback is always welcome.

The next *Newsletter* will continue the holiday theme, this time to the beautiful island of Cyprus. As far as darts history is concerned Issue Four will include a darts-related image that I can *guarantee* has never been published before anywhere on the planet.

Issue Four will be e-mailed to all subscribers at the end of May/beginning of June.

Cheers for now.

Patrick Chaplin

