

DR. DARTS' NEWSLETTER

Issue 32 December 2012

INTRODUCTION

Hi everyone and welcome to Issue 32 of *DDN*.



The image (right) shows Scotland's Harry Heenan one of that country's darts heroes of the late 1970s and early 1980s. Sadly Harry died in early November. A tribute to the man John Lowe called 'The Pride of Scotland' is featured in this issue. That's two of Scotland's great dartsmen lost this year, the first of course being Jocky Wilson last March.

Thus the publication of the promised articles relating to William Jewiss, 'the first world darts champion', the history of darts in India and Northwood Collapsible Darts have been postponed until a future issue.

But it's still a jam-packed *DDN* so I'll just take time out here to wish all those who celebrate Christmas a very happy one and to those who don't I wish you a very happy holiday season. To each and every one of you I hope that 2013 will be kind to you and that your darts will fly true.

OK. Let's see what #32 has to offer.

CHRIS HELMS – PRESIDENT OF THE ADO

Readers will recall that in Issue #31 I reported that Chris Helms, President of the American Darts Organization (pictured, image courtesy of the ADO) suffered a skull fracture following an accident at work in late September. He was 'life-flighted' to University Hospital, San Antonio where he immediately underwent surgery.

ADO Regional Director Elaine Bohls has provided me with an update (28th November) about Chris's condition and the news is all good. Elaine writes, "Chris gets a day pass this weekend! So, he will be sprung for a few hours and get to go home. He continues to make leaps and bounds and is walking with a walker or pushing the wheelchair. He is talking and they are planning on bringing in an oche so that Chris can work with his darts and with teaching other patients how to play. Thank you all for the prayers and the support. It is all working." The pass will be only for a few hours, but will enable Chris to go home so that



the family can evaluate and identify any potential problems which can then be fixed before Chris is released from the hospital. His doctor has also talked to Chris's family about them needing to have someone stay with him during the day or taking him in for his therapy once he is released from the hospital.

Progress indeed. Thanks Elaine for keeping me (and *DDN* readers) informed and please send Chris our very best wishes.

FEEDBACK

The feedback in response to issue #31 has been great and I really appreciate the comments received from Glen in Seattle who wrote "Thanks...for your latest issue of *DDN*. It's a fantastic issue, as always, my friend - really enjoyed hearing how your shoulder is recovering, and how you're once again able to play darts... Keep up the good progress recovering, and hopefully you'll be back to 100% soon!"

Glen, who is a great collector of darts memorabilia, found the section on the regional dartboards particularly interesting and added, "It sounds like the Fives dartboards (pictured), whether Narrow or Wide Fives, predate the other boards such as the Yorkshire or Irish Doubles boards."



Well Glen, that's the theory I have; that the Yorkshire Board was born out of the Fives Board by Thomas Buckle. I also believe that the Fives Board followed on from the concentric, miniature archery target board. Finally Glen said, "I hope that you'll cover each of the regional dartboards in subsequent issues." Glen, my friend, I'll do my very best.

Mick S. enthused over #31 too. He wrote, "Just read the latest *DDN*. Fantastic as ever. I can honestly say the worst part is when I've read it and 'that's it' for another month. But as ever you need to be congratulated for another great read. And you need to be congratulated on winning your first game back no doubt many more will follow. Good luck to you Patrick. "Amazing!" is all I can say about the amount of research you must do to put together the massive article on the clock dart board. BRILLIANT."

Finally, Dave B. wrote "As always another brilliant *DDN*. Lots of interesting content for the "layman" such as me."

UNUSUAL SCORING

I've received a curious e-mail from James E. He wrote, "Years ago my dad told me there was a pub in Peckham (when he was young, he would have been 100 this year) where they used to score darts matches in Roman numerals. Was this a practice just in South

London or was this a one off?” Well James, I’m looking into it but if any *DDN* can help, please contact me via my website.

PATRICK DEE – THE CURATOR OF DARTS



Daryl from Australia enjoyed the recent *DDN* piece about Patrick Dee, ‘The Curator of Darts’. He wrote, “As always a great read. I have become one of those that can’t wait to receive your newsletter each month. Keep up the great work. I would love to have a look through Patrick Dee’s Museum but me being in Australia makes it just a little hard.”

Yes, Daryl, that does make it a bit difficult but who knows? You might make it over to the UK some day. If that happens, I’ll take you to see Patrick

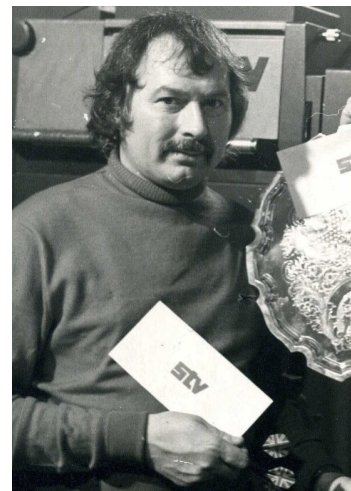
Dee’s museum myself. In the meantime here’s another image taken when I visited Patrick earlier this year. (Note the tailor’s dummy on the extreme left, wearing one of Bobby George’s capes which Bobby generously donated to Patrick’s collection.)

HARRY HEENAN

For the second time this year I have to report on the death of a Scottish darts star.

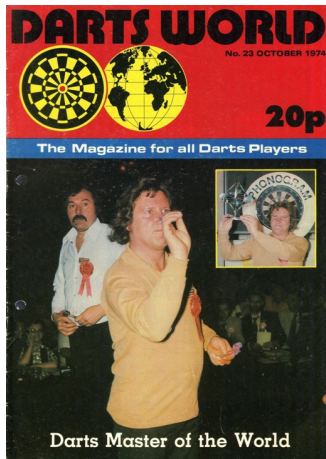
Earlier this year it was Jocky Wilson but now it’s Harry Heenan (pictured right), a man who burst on to the darts scene in the early 1970s but by the end of the decade had more or less given up the professional game. However, he had certainly left his mark on the sport across the world.

Harry was born in Glasgow on 13th May 1936 and, according to Derek Brown (author of *The Guinness Book of Darts*) Harry’s darts career began in a Glasgow pub in 1961 when restrictions on playing the game in that city were lifted. (Prior to the Second World War, darts had been banned in Glasgow on the grounds that the game encouraged ‘ne’er do wellism’ and youngsters to drink so by the early 1960s darts was only beginning to find its feet in the city.) In 1961 Harry was working in a bar and quickly took to this ‘new’ pub sport.



Harry came to national prominence when he played in the inaugural Phonogram (later Winmau) World Masters in 1974. In a close-fought final Harry was eventually beaten 3-2

in legs by England's Cliff Inglis. *Darts World* reported that the standard of darts throughout the tournament was 'in most cases exceptional' with no less than 234 'tons' being scored. The two men 'captivated the large audience' at the West Centre Hotel, London, none of the five legs going to more than twenty darts. Sid Waddell recalled in 2007 that during that final 'both [players] drank copiously but the standard did not drop. In the end Cliff, the more relaxed throughout, won and the players collapsed into each other's arms.' The cover of *Darts World* (Issue 23, October 1974 (below)) shows Harry and Cliff on stage in that tightest of finals.



In 1981 Derek Brown wrote that during the late 1970s Harry had reached the semi-finals of the *Sunday Mail* Masters, won the Scottish singles in 1971 and was an international player who was 'known on both sides of the Atlantic for his bubbling personality'. Derek further recorded that in 1980 Harry had made his sixth successive summer trip to America. Harry's successes 'across the big pond' included being runner-up to London's Charlie Ellix in the 1977 Golden Gate Classic.

Darts entrepreneur (and good friend of Harry) Eddie Norman told me, "Ann, his wife and Harry were indeed good friends of mine and ran a pub in Glasgow before emigrating to Spain to run another bar *The Glaswegian*. Harry played for me in The West of England Darts Organisation and paid his own fare down to Bristol or wherever we were playing in the UK. (Can you imagine anyone doing that today?) I used to arrange a few exhibitions for him when he was down for county matches to help cover his expenses. He and his wife Ann travelled extensively overseas with The West of England team including Malta, Russia, Sweden, Denmark and further afield. He was a great friend of Alan Evans and Leighton Rees."

According to Eddie, Harry had a great singing voice and apparently Welsh darts star Alan Evans believed that he also had a great voice. Eddie recalled, "Thus these two were regular entertainers when we were on tour, Alan with his Welsh songs and Harry in full Scottish voice."

Eddie also told me, "On one occasion Harry travelled by ferry to the Isle of Man with the West of England team. Alan and Harry were on deck singing and Alan was notorious for getting sea sick and predictably was sick overboard. As Alan hung over the side Harry patted him on the back at which moment Alan's false front teeth fell out and overboard." Instead of thanking Harry for helping him out, Alan blamed Harry for patting his back!

Eddie described Harry as 'a wonderful character' who represented Scotland very proudly, like all Scots. Eddie added, "Harry was a brilliant darts player and a wonderful person. RIP Harry."

Fellow Scot Jamie Harvey saddened to hear of Harry's death said, "For me my key memory of Harry was when I was given my very first international cap for Scotland against Wales at Glasgow's Skiandhu Hotel. I woke up early and I was really nervous. I phoned Harry and asked if I could come and see him at his bar in Glasgow, *The Glaswegian*.

I arrived at 10 a.m. Harry let me in and said "What's wrong son?" I said, "Harry, look at my hands. I'm shaking. It's my first cap." He said nothing, but walked over to the gantry and poured four, maybe five whiskies into one glass. Then Harry said, "Drink that son and you will beat anybody." After I finished I went to the venue and found that I was drawn last game on against Byron Wozencraft. The match went to seven-a-piece so everything depended on me beating Byron. I won 3-0. Thanks Harry Heenan for helping me make my way on the darts scene. R.I.P."

In 1972 Harry revealed his philosophy of darts to a Glasgow newspaper which was later featured at <http://www.oldglasgowpubs.co.uk/souwester.html>; a superb website set up and run under the auspices of Glasgow Public House Historian, John Gorevan. Harry was interviewed at the *Sou' Wester* bar in Bridge Street, Tradeston in the city. He told a reporter, "You get a lot more out of darts than you have to put into it; prizes and pleasure in my case. It's not like football or any of the demanding games. You don't have to kill yourself training. You don't have to deprive yourself of anything. You can take a drink and your favourite dish...It really is an enjoyable pastime, inexpensive and rewarding."

Frank Quinn, the first-ever President of the Scottish Darts Association (SDA) and the first team manager for Scotland, was saddened to receive news of the death of his good friend Harry. Frank recalled the days when the darts teams of the *Sou' Wester* and *The Glaswegian* fought for glory in the Glasgow and District Premier League back in the 1970s. The accompanying



photograph of *The Glaswegian* darts team taken in 1975 shows Harry (extreme right) and Frank, the team Captain, (third from the left). (Frank is playfully strangling Harry's fellow Scottish International Joe McLaney.) (Darts team image provided by Frank Quinn © 1975 *South Side News*)

Another top Scottish darts player of the period, Rab Smith, recalled playing with Harry back in 1977. Rab told me, "I think it was at a pub that Harry owned, *The Sou' Wester*. He was one very good player and played for Scotland in 1977." Rab also remembered Harry's prowess at throwing his darts flight first and how he scored 180 that way on many occasions. Rab said, "Harry was one of the good guys."

Three-time Embassy World Professional Darts Champion John Lowe was one of the first to post a blog relating to Harry's passing. John wrote, "I first met Harry...the pride of Scottish darts...on The Indoor League...he represented Scotland on many occasions. He owned a bar in Glasgow, *The Glaswegian*, for many years. He was a great boxing fan and

wore a pair of golden gloves around his neck. Harry was one of the pioneers of Scottish darts and will be long-remembered. My condolences to his family.”

Scottish darts legend, Harry Heenan died of pneumonia in Magaluf on Tuesday 6th November 2012 aged 76.

(My special thanks to Derek Brown, John Gorevan, Jamie Harvey, John Lowe, Eddie Norman, Frank Quinn, Rab Smith, Steve Wadsworth and Ocheboy.)

180! FASCINATING DARTS FACTS

There's still time to order my new book *180! Fascinating Darts Facts* at the discounted price of £6.50 (normal RRP £7.99) but **HURRY** as **this exclusive offer expires on 14th December** (see below). Also my publisher has told me that she has had to order a reprint as 'stocks are already low'.



You'll need to access The History Press website at

<http://www.thehistorypress.co.uk/products/180-Fascinating-Darts-Facts.aspx>

and then **ensure that you enter the special code HPDARTS.**

By the way, I've already had a response from a very happy customer. *DDN* subscriber Ad Kobbenhaegen from the south of Holland wrote to me and said, "Yesterday morning I received your book *180! Fascinating Darts Facts*. Amazing. All the trivia together in one book. I read it in about three hours. Every dartplayer must have this book."

Thanks Ad but rest assured that's not *all* the trivia I have. If *180!* sells well I have tons more 'original' trivia to fill *180! – 2*. (I have already been asked by a US subscriber if I plan to prepare a *Stateside 180!*)

HAPPY 40th BIRTHDAY *DARTS WORLD*!

It's hard to believe that the longest-established darts magazine on the planet *Darts World* is forty years old this month.

The first issue of *Darts World* appeared on the shelves of newsagents up and down the UK in late 1972, was dated November/December and for most of the following four decades was under the guiding editorial hand of Tony Wood. The front page of Issue No. 1 (pictured) featured an image of four of the greatest darts players of the time, Tony Bell, Johnny Nichols, Willy Hetherington and Tommy O'Regan; champions all and, at the time, members of the Greater London team.

In his editorial for that first issue Tony outlined the problems extant within the world of darts in the early 1970s; the fragmentation of leagues and associations which made it difficult for anyone to organise the game on a national scale, the rules of the game differing from one area to another or the different dartboards that varied from county to county in size, shape and numbering.



Back in 1972 Tony admitted that the magazine alone would not automatically eliminate problems affecting darts but that it would play its part in giving darts the means to find the answers; *Darts World* being designed 'to help those who want to help darts...to give darts players a platform and a voice and to provide them with as much information about the game as possible so that all who want to can play their part.'

Since that first issue *Darts World* has chronicled the important and indeed the less important (and sometimes strange and amusing) developments within darts, a sport (and remember it was only formally recognised as such in 2005) which was to be profoundly changed, some might say beyond all recognition, in the four decades that followed compared to that which had existed pre-1972.



The quality of journalism in the magazine has always been of the highest order and, in addition to Tony, I would particularly point to Wayne Baker and John Gwynne as, until only recently, key regular contributors to *Darts World*, men who simply love the sport of darts.

As regular readers will probably know, I have been contributing to *Darts World* and its sister publication *Darts Player* off and on since 1985 when Tony (pictured here in June 2010) was good enough to publish my article titled *Royal*

Approval, a short piece about Queen Elizabeth (the Queen Mother) playing darts at the Slough Community Centre in December 1937. As far as I am concerned, *Darts World* has been (and remains) an invaluable tool in my continuing bid to recover the full history of the sports of darts. Tony's assistance and access to the *Darts World* archives played a large part in enabling me to travel the long and very difficult road that eventually led to me become the first person in the world to be awarded a PhD in the social history of our sport.

Darts World continues to this day to provide a forum for darts players up, down and across the UK (and indeed abroad) to bring their news to all darts fans. The regular county reports are submitted by some darts enthusiasts on a regular basis and keep everyone apprised of who the main achievers are at county level and, perhaps more importantly, which players are coming up through the ranks to challenge for major titles. The only sad thing about it is that not all counties submit monthly reports. Some never have but I would encourage everyone to do so.

In 2007 Tony Wood (who back in 1977 was described by the American darts author Jack McClintock as 'An intelligent, well-dressed young man who wears horn-rims and has the clean-faced look of a new vicar' (He still does!)) stepped away from his editorial desk and passed the baton to Michael Beeken of MB Graphics. Since then, although a number of changes had perforce to be made, Michael continues to hold the banner high for darts with what is (at the time of writing) the only magazine published in the UK totally devoted to darts.

Happy 40th Birthday *Darts World*!

JOHN LOWE'S NEW DARTS APP



People who know me well understand that I have still to come to grips with modern technology. So when three-time World Professional Darts Champion John wrote to me a few weeks ago saying, "Patrick, My new coaching application for iphone and ipad will be out before your next issue, maybe you can review it. I am sure you will like it. The guys at Fatspanner have put together a very slick production", I knew just what to do.

I asked my friend David King (of www.darts501.com fame) to review the App for me and he kindly obliged. In short David was very impressed with the App which is priced at £1.99 and available from the Apple Store. David calls it 'a perfect accompaniment to John's book *The Art of Darts*'.

David's detailed review can be found at <http://darts501.com/News.htm>. (Thanks David.)

'Metalman' has reported to me that John's new App 'is getting a good reception but some of us don't have ipads (Me) and would love a PC version.' He added, "I'm still on steam powered XP! It would be great if it could be done at some point."

I asked John and he replied, "Hopefully it will be out on the android system soon. The problem is there are five different systems, unlike Apple which only has one, not sure about a PC version. I think the problem there is copying." So I'll let you all know when I hear more from John.

ERIC MARCHINGTON

Way, way back in *DDN* #22 (February 2012) I featured a photograph (right) I had found in my archive of a man named Eric Marchington. The image showed Eric with what appears to be a very extensive collection of darts newspaper cuttings. There was no indication of the date the image was taken or where. The only clue was that the photographer who took the picture was based in Audenshaw, which is in the Metropolitan Borough of Tameside, Greater Manchester.



I asked *DDN* readers if they could help and eventually received a response from the stalwart of Irish darts, Arthur Hook. He had been rummaging through his back issues of *Darts World* and found Eric's story on page 48 in number 120 (November 1982). The story formed part of John Gwynne's *Piccadilly Line* column in which John confirmed that Eric (who was 81 years old at the time) had regularly contributed to the magazine with darts news from the Manchester area.

John Gwynne met with Eric in 1982 and viewed the scrapbooks for himself; items going back some twenty years (that is ten years longer than *Darts World* had been running at the time). Chatting the Eric, John learned that Eric had been born in Manchester but moved to near the Derbyshire Peaks, eventually coming back to 'town' to settle in the Stockport area. "Have darts. Will travel" was how Eric described his attitude to the game since he had taken up darts relatively late in life and helped form a local league in Marple in 1958. John wrote back in 1982 "Such is his energy that he belies every one of his eighty years. He's eight times older than *Darts World* and the darts world will have Eric around for a lot longer yet I'm sure!"

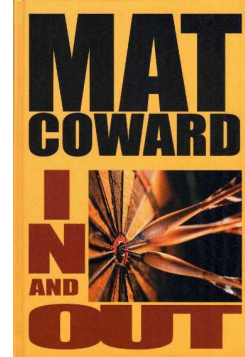
I suspect that Eric has long joined the players on the oche in the sky but clearly he was a prime example of a man prepared to put a lot into the sport for little or no reward. Such men are the pillars, the foundation of our sport not only back then but also today.

Although Eric may no longer be with us, I sincerely hope that his cuttings books found their way to either a serious darts enthusiast or, better still, to a local library or archive.

IN AND OUT – A DARTS MURDER MYSTERY

Those of you who enjoy both darts and a great detective story should check out Mat Coward's excellent novel *In and Out* if you haven't done so already as it's now been published as it has just been published as an eBook.

I first reviewed Mat's book back in 2001 and found the story about murder on a darts night (the victim having been found in the ladies' toilet with her head caved in with a concrete doorstep) an absorbing read. My full review of *In and Out* can be found on my website by going to <http://www.patrickchaplin.com/Matcowardinandout.htm>.



Mat contacted me recently to say that, although *In and Out* in both hardback and paperback has been out of print for a while, darts and murder mystery fans might be interested to know that the book has just published as an eBook and that it's available at <http://www.smashwords.com/books/view/255324>

COMING UP IN ISSUE 33...

News of Eric Bristow's time in the jungle in *I'm a Celebrity Get Me Out of Here!*

AND FINALLY...

Thanks to each and every one who has helped me in anyway with articles for or the preparation of *DDN* over the past year. Thanks too to all those who have posed questions during 2012 many of which I have been able to answer and then feature in *DDN*.

By the way, if during 2013 you change your e-mail address and you still wish to receive *DDN*, please ensure that I am included on your notification list so that I can amend the details on my subscribers' list. Thanks.

HAPPY HOLIDAYS!

Patrick

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