

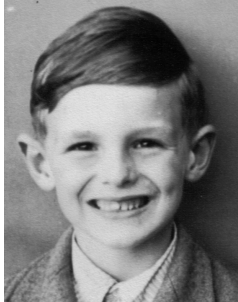
DR. DARTS' NEWSLETTER

Issue 38 June 2013



INTRODUCTION

Thanks to everyone who responded to articles featured in *DDN* #37, and especially the young lad (pictured left). Do you recognise him? He's a World Champion darts player. Who do you think it is? (The answer is given later in this issue.)



It never ceases to amaze me where time goes. As soon as I've sent out one *DDN* I'm working on the next one. Some subscribers write to ask me "How do you do it?" Sometimes I reply, "I haven't the faintest idea!" (that's on bad days) but mainly I have to admit that I do what I do because I *love* the sport of darts. (It certainly isn't for the money!) And of course I compile *DDN* because of you my subscribers some of whom write words of encouragement to me every month and thus keep me going during the times that I fancy chucking it all in. (I think I need a holiday!)

I've lots for you again this month so without more ado...

FOLLOW UP FROM PREVIOUS ISSUES:

(a) Kim Brown and smart darters

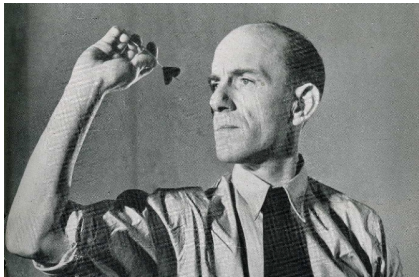
In the March issue of *DDN* I included an obituary of the Bristol darting legend Kim Brown; the accompanying image (republished below) showing Kim in shirt and tie. This prompted 'Phil the Postman' to write:

"Hi Patrick. Thanks for the great newsletter this month...fascinating to see players wearing thick wool cardigans and sports jackets whilst playing in tournaments. This was the norm for players of the fifties through to the seventies in my own area...none more so than our own late Cliff Kelly.



As with all the Kelly family he was a player of some note and a member of the Pensnett Welfare Club [*Brierley Hill, West Midlands*] team that won the coveted CIU [*Club and Institute Union*] team championship in the sixties. Cliff would never play unless dressed in the proper attire...crisp white shirt with tie, sports jacket or blazer, highly-polished shoes and trousers with three-inch turn-ups and creases you could cut yourself on. Players nowadays prefer jeans, trainers and football shirts...Can't really blame them I suppose.

There is one of that team still playing league darts, namely Jimmy Jay, who has just passed 83 years young and enjoying his darts on Monday nights and still at the Welfare club."



Thanks for the feedback Phil. Yes, you're absolutely right of course. Players did dress more formally back then but, as with everything else, times and habits change.

The image (left) shows East Anglian darts champion George Caley (circa 1950) in shirt and tie. Notice that the right shirt sleeve is turned up in order to free the arm in order to effectively execute George's 'Double

Pivot' action of elbow and wrist and his 'Upside down pendulum' movement. (Caley image courtesy of PC Archive. Used with permission.)

(b) 180! Fascinating Darts Facts

Glen H. from Seattle who recently received the copy of *180! Fascinating Darts Facts* he had pre-ordered from Amazon.co.uk wrote to me exclaiming, "What a fun and fantastic book. Well done. I thoroughly enjoyed it! I had never known why 01 games were 01 and hadn't known that folks used the Cribbage board for scoring dart games before chalkboards had been in greater use. I enjoyed your sections in the book regarding debunking dart myths. Fun to know that 'Fal Priolo' may have contributed to some myths. Fun stuff Dr. Darts!!! Keep up the great work my friend."

(c) Youngest 180

You may recall that in the last issue Bobby W from Cleveland, UK (incorrectly referred to in that issue as 'Bobby B') told us about his son who, at the age of six, hit his first 140. In response I asked Bobby to let me know when his son hits his first maximum. Well, just as the May *DDN* was being issued to subscribers, Bobby sent me an update. He wrote,

"Just to give you an update on my little lad, he hit his first 180 about a month ago and today he checked out on 102 to beat me. I told him to go for triple 20 with first dart but he slipped in to 1 so I told him to go triple 17 and bull and that's exactly what he did. I was absolutely gob-smacked. He's only 7. He's got his board lower and throws from a bit closer but it's still amazing I think. He throws about a foot closer than the proper distance. His grandad is amazed and he has been a pub landlord all his life."

In response to the article in issue 37 I received an e-mail from the young lad pictured on the front page of this issue. Did you guess who it is? He's a bit older now. Yes, it was no other than the



1988 Embassy World Champion Professional Darts Champion, Bob Anderson (pictured above a little later in life). Bob said,

“Hi Patrick. Enjoyed the newsletter, as always...Thought you would like to know that I scored my first 180 aged SEVEN, in a competition, at Vickers Armstrong Social Club, Swindon, in an inter office cup match. Someone let my father's team down on the night, and I filled in! I was using big old brass darts, very heavy and bulky Schofield darts.”

I've always admired darts players who throw Schofield darts well; hollow brass tubes filled with lead to suit, that is light, medium or heavy, with cane stems and paper flights



(Schofield image (left) © Frank Hudson. Young Bob image © Bob and Sally Anderson and used with permission. Older Bob image courtesy of the PC/DW Archive.)

From Seattle, Grover P. wrote in response to the same article, “Hi, Patrick. I enjoyed this issue very much especially the discussion of children getting a maximum. I recently got my first 180! Unfortunately, I only needed 173 to go out. After I threw the first two darts

in the triple-20 bed, I tried for a triple one to leave my team with an easy out. But I slipped into the triple-20 bed again and busted! I was so shaken and disgusted that I failed to record the event with my phone's camera. We again played the same team tonight and they remembered my goof and teased me some more about it! I'm playing darts with your friend Glen H. and we really play mostly for fun.”

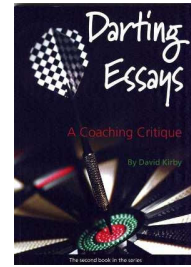
Grover is a little older than me...just. Mind you it's never a bad time to hit your first maximum. By the way you guys, I'm still waiting for the story of your team's rather unusual mascot (the 'Unimoose') and a team photo...

(d) Jamie Caven – Book Review

In the May issue I reviewed Jamie Caven's book *The Way I See The Game – The Jamie Caven Story*. Well 'Jabba' seemed to approve of it as he wrote back saying, “Hi Patrick, I have read the May edition of DDN and thank you for your review of my book. The newsletter is a very good read and I look forward to reading future editions.” Jamie's co-author David Kirby replied, “Excellent newsletter.” Thanks guys.

Some readers may be aware that David Kirby published his book *The Definitive Darts Coaching Manual* subtitled *Your pathway to success* back in January 2012. Although the word 'definitive' was used in the title David has now decided that 'it might be easier to digest the wide range of topics' in a series of booklets. (It was always going to be very difficult to be 'definitive' in seventy pages.) So despite the quality and readability of the first book David has wisely continued imparting his darts tuition knowledge and advice in his second book *Darting Essays – A Coaching Critique*.

Darting Essays is an alphabetical selection (ranging from 'A Plan for You' and 'Beer or Yoga' to 'What is the Point?') all featuring very useful hints and tips from general coaching principles to motivational topics.



David is already planning a third book which although he says the contents are being kept 'under wraps' does reveal on page 5 of *Darting Essays* that it 'will feature a new and radical approach to coaching and playing the game'; a book bound to 'cause healthy debate.' That really is something to look forward to I'm sure. After that David plans two more books to complete what will clearly be a definitive work.

(e) Akshay Mehta

Back in Issue #36 (April) I wished Indian darter Akshay Mehta 'Happy Birthday' as he was eighteen years old on 18th April.



Well, the birthday boy had little time to celebrate as the following day he was in Darjeeling playing in the India National Ranking Darts Championship from 19th to 21st of that month. Akshay has written to me, "Sir, I'm currently India No 1. I played in recent National Ranking Darts championship..." and he even sent me a copy of the rankings list to prove it.

Akshay continued, "I was in the Men's singles finals, Men's Doubles Finals and the Team event finals. I won in Team event by 3-0, lost in Men's singles by 4-3 and lost in Men's Doubles by 2-0." The winner of the Men's singles was Vikash Kothari of West Bengal and the Men's doubles was won by Shubham and Amit (no first names provided) from Akshay's home state of Gujarat.

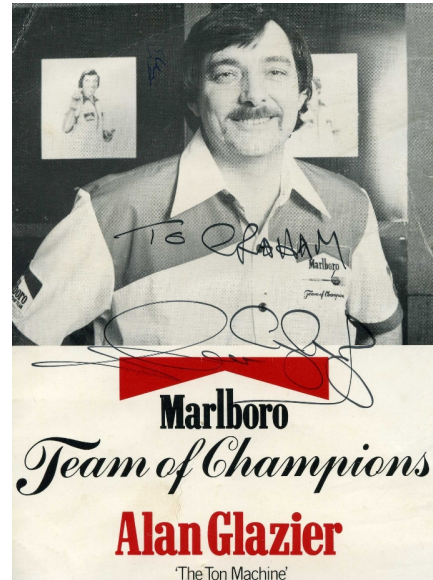
(f) The Polo mint challenge

In the March *DDN* I set homework asking readers if they knew anything about a darts competition set by a national newspaper in the UK challenging darters to put three darts into the centre of a Polo mint without breaking. In issue #36 (April) I mentioned that I had received feedback from Peter M. and 'Cainey' but I have only just realised that I did not tell readers what their feedback was! So here it is now...

Peter M. from Cornwall wrote, "In reference to the polo mint comp, it was run by the Sun newspaper and had I think Alan Glazier as the player involved. At the same time at fêtes, etc we set up a similar game (50p for three darts) but giving away £1 for one dart in the hole, £2 for two darts and £5 for all three. Unfortunately I can't remember what year it was."

‘Cainey’ told me, “Yes Patrick. There was a competition for throwing three darts into a polo mint. I think it was one of the major tabloids. The problem was if you were lucky enough to get one or even two in the hole the third dart even if it was on target would smash the mint. We tried this for years in the RC club in Stoke-on-Trent, long after the competition had ended. We had quite a few close encounters and eventually my late great mate Freddie Nichols (aged 62) achieved it but only with a set of darts we had made with two and a half inch long points. Happy days!”

In a subsequent e-mail Cainey added, “The golden polo mint competition you mention was run by Dave Lanning [through his popular darts column] in *The Sun*. As you say it went after Alan Glazier (pictured right, image courtesy of the PC Collection) said he could put a dart through a polo mint, and basically anyone who could do it with witnesses received a gold polo mint. I never won one even though I was well in with Dave and his column! If only I could play! The reason we lengthened the points is so the barrel did not smash the polo mint.”



Was Alan Glazier the inspiration behind this competition? One rumour I heard recently says that he actually won the competition. If someone could give me an exact year let me know via info@patrickchaplin.com and I'll gladly check out the newspapers for the facts.

JUDY CAMPBELL – BRITISH OPEN LADIES CHAMPION 1979

A few weeks ago I was contacted via my website www.patrickchaplin.com by Paul C. He wrote:

‘Hi. My grandma (Judy Campbell) was the lady who won the first singles in 1979. I am trying to find some photos or a write up of it. But I am finding it difficult. Is there anyway you could assist me please?’

The name seemed to ring a bell with me but not a very loud one, so I set about looking for information about Judy from within my extensive archive. (As you all probably know researching darts is such a problem as very little is out there on the ‘net.) My first port of call was Derek Brown’s book *The Guinness Book of Darts* (1981) and I immediately found the following brief biography of Judy:

Campbell, Judy (b 3 Jan. 1937) took up darts at a nurses’ social club in the mid-sixties, in 1970 won the NDA [National Darts Association of Great Britain] women’s individual, and in 1979 became the first winner of the women’s singles at the British Open. Born in Northern Ireland of a Scottish mother, and has gained one Scotland cap. Although based

in Carlton in Lindrick, Nottinghamshire, has played her county darts for Bedfordshire and London.

Although there had been other 'British Open's in earlier years, Judy Campbell was the first lady to win the British Open Championships sponsored by Watneys (the brewer) and M.Y. (The 'M.Y.' stood for 'Marks and Young' a company that manufactured darts and dartboards.) The Open took place in January 1979 at the Royal Horticultural Hall, Victoria, London.



The report in *Darts World* for February 1979 is scant and barely mentions the Ladies' match. This was nothing unusual for the time. The report merely stated

*The first **ladies singles** champion in the championship, which was sponsored by Watneys and MY Darts, is Judy Campbell from Lincoln. She beat Christine Allen (Littlehampton) in the final.*

Clearly Judy was not a 'one hit wonder' otherwise she would never have been included in *The Guinness Book of Darts*. Further research of my archive revealed that Judy, together with her pairs partner Peggy Glover, won the prestigious Berger Brolac Ladies' Pairs trophy at the Rainbow Suite, Kensington, London, in February 1983. According to *Darts World* (March 1983 issue) Judy and Peggy beat Sue Brazelle and Fran Westlake 3-1 in the final.

The only other evidence I found was a photograph (right, cropped) captioned 'Judy Campbell receives cheque for £100 and Rose Bowl from Geoffrey Arter Director Top Ten.' The full title of 'Top Ten' was actually the 'Spastics Pool Top Ten Promotions Ltd', a Bristol-based charitable organisation raising funds for the Spastics Society (later renamed 'Scope').

Unfortunately I do not have the actual date or venue for this image but the event was held under the auspices of the County of Cornwall Spastics organisation in association with (I think) Haven Holidays.



Paul was very pleased with my response. However, I am sure that there will be older darts players out there (especially amongst the ladies) who will remember playing against Judy in her heyday. If you can help with any further information please write to me at info@patrickchaplin.com and I'll pass it on to Paul.

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TAVERN DARTS

Darin M. from Belfast has e-mailed me via my website asking for assistance. He wrote, "I was wondering if you could help me with a little problem I have with a set of very old, and seemingly very rare darts [pictured] with no brand name or symbols on them."



I have searched the 'net for information on them and alas have found nothing like them any where. They are brass and although quite heavy they seem hollow, also the stems, which unfortunately I do not have yet, seem to push/clip on to what I can only describe as a collet-like mechanism with a knurled ring at what I presume is the base of the stem shaft."

As soon as I saw the image, memories came flooding back. I bought a set of those darts in the mid-1960s. They were only the second or

third set of darts I ever owned. (In fact they are less than three feet away from me as I type this!)

The darts were introduced by UNICORN in November 1959 and were called THE TAVERN. They were the first dart ever to be produced in the shape of a beer bottle. The 'knurled ring' Darin mentioned is in fact the beer bottle cap. As you will see from the promotional photograph extracted from Unicorn's *Darts Data* (No. 3, Winter 1977/78) the darts were given a beer colour and also had a beer bottle label on each. The darts are solid brass; not hollow.



As for the stems, these were push-on and were described by the company at the time as 'Delicately moulded plastic...equivalent to feather.' These were also the flights that Unicorn used with their GAMESHOT darts range.

The darts are not as rare as people might think. Over 100,000 sets were sold by Unicorn during the first year they were marketed.

My key contact at Unicorn, Stanley L. was good enough to provide more information. He replied, "Here is a link to the catalogue page in 1959 when the Tavern Darts were introduced and you can see the original package which was printed card and an advertisement card.

http://www.unicorn-darts.com/upload/dartsbooks/pages/dbp4_11.jpg

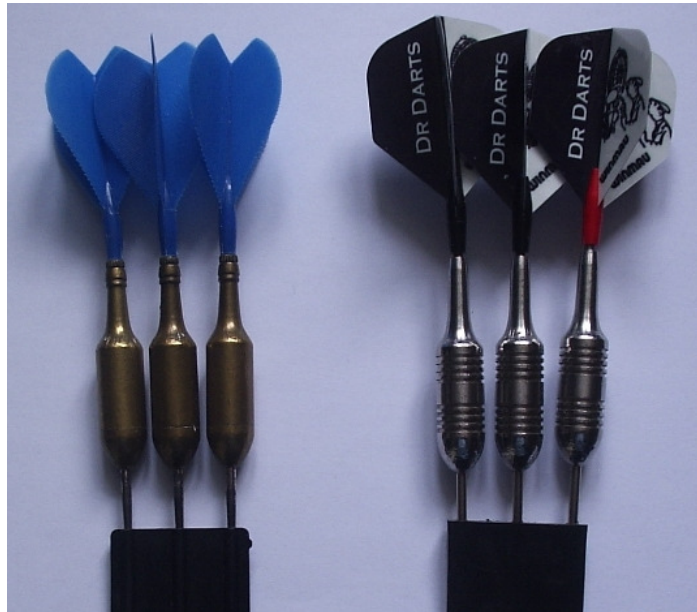
Oh that darts were only 5/11 a set now!!!

You will see that the beer colour was pretty good; we cheekily had Guinness in mind for the bottle colour and the label.”

Unicorn were still selling Tavern Darts in 1975, by then in a plastic case; see link

http://www.unicorn-darts.com/upload/dartsbooks/pages/dbp7_19.jpg.

I played with my ‘bottles’ for many years and during the 1970s my brother-in-law made a unique set of ‘Taverns’ for me out of a chrome bar. I think the reason was that I needed something to *grip* and these unique darts did the trick. In the image (right) you’ll see both my original Tavern darts (complete with push-on ‘Gameshot’ flights) and my unique chrome set. Notice that my well-loved original set is devoid of the bottle labels and the original ‘Guinness’ colour is gone; worn down to bare brass with overuse.



When the ‘Gameshot’ flights were no longer available I feared that I would have to pack my chrome ‘Tavern’ darts away but the folks at Unicorn suggested that I utilised the ‘JetStem’ tops (made of acetal co-polymer) and they worked a treat. You can see the ‘tops’ in place on the chrome set (above).

From the very beginning the shape and weight of The Tavern seemed to work well with my being a mixed lateral (back then I threw with my left hand but lined the dart up with my right eye), and I won a good number of ‘house’ competitions at my local pub...but that was then...

BADGE COLLECTING

Absolutely ages ago I received an enquiry from Mike C. about a darts badge/patch he had bought on e Bay. He told me, “I liked the look of it and now I’m curious as to which team it belonged or belongs to.” Mike’s interesting purchase can be found at:

<http://i1108.photobucket.com/albums/h408/scrumpy10/mccwales.jpg>

Mike added, “As you can see it includes a dragon and a pair of daffodils so I am 99.9% certain it comes from a Welsh team. I don’t know how old the patch is but it is in very

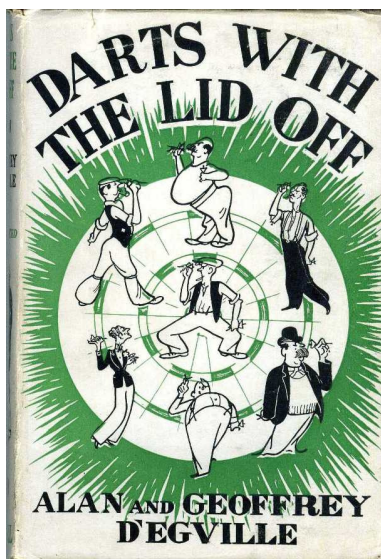
good condition so it's more than likely fairly recent, but I have seen patches from the 70's and 80's that are still in as good condition. Patrick, this is where you come in. Would you know which team it was, or would you know of anyone I could contact on this matter?"

Mike has been on a well-known darts forum where one member suggested that the 'M' could stand for Montgomery or Merioneth but otherwise he drew a blank. Mike told me, "It's stumped the Welsh guys on the forum and it was also posted on the BDO forum Facebook page for me."

Apart from suggesting 'Monmouthshire County Council', that the badge was of Welsh origin and, given the type of detailed quality embroidery involved, probably fairly old, I was not able to be of any further help to Mike. So, how about any Welsh *DDN* readers? Do *you* recognise the badge? If so, please contact me at info@patrickchaplin.com.

DARTS WITH THE LID OFF

Another item that has been awaiting inclusion in *DDN* for an embarrassingly long time (July 2011 in fact!) is an interesting e-mail I received from Chris Kimberley who is/was undertaking research into the D'Egville family name.



Chris had e-mailed to tell me that he had found Mat Coward's 1983 retrospective review of Alan and Geoffrey D'Egville's *Darts With The Lid Off* (London: Cassell & Company, 1938, the first humorous darts book ever published) on my website and then asked "Does your PhD dissertation comment on the book?"

I replied at length to Chris, saying how pleased I was that my work and Mat Coward's review had proved useful to him in his family history research. I also confirmed that Alan and Geoffrey D'Egville's book was mentioned three times in both my PhD and the subsequent book based on that study, *Darts in England 1900-39 – A social history* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2009, paperback 2012).

Chris then published the details provided together with his own comments at

<http://degville-research.blogspot.com/2011/07/darts-with-lid-off.html>

Of the two brothers it was Alan who tended to write about sport, including skiing. He and Geoffrey's brief foray into darts helped raise funds for the *Loyal Society of Dartsmen* (£.s.d), a charity which during the latter part of the 1930s raised funds for the voluntary hospitals.

HOMework

While I'm still on the subject of catching up with items that have yet to be featured in *DDN*, Mick S. wrote to me last year and nominated his top three favourite-ever darts people. Mick firstly selected the late great Joe Hitchcock and then declared, "The greatest of all time for me [*is*] the one and only Eric Bristow."

What I liked about Mick's selection was that his other nomination was not a darts player but an official. Mick wrote, "There is more than one treble on the dartboard and this treble is a man called **Les Treble**. He had a lot to do with the greatest dart tournament in the world, the *News of the World*. From at least 1951 Les was involved in this great tournament and in 1990 his name is still on *NoW* programmes. To be involved all those years is to me dedication beyond belief."

So, who would *you* select as *your* top three darts players/officials of all time? Please send your selections (and your reasons for selecting them) to me at the usual address.

OK, that's it for *DDN* #38. I hope you've enjoyed it. (All feedback is welcomed.)

PATRICK

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My academic work, *Darts in England 1900-39: A social history* is now available in paperback at £15.99 (plus p & p) and can be ordered from www.nbinternational.com.

