



DR DARTS' NEWSLETTER



ISSUE FOUR – JUNE 2010

INTRODUCTION

Welcome one and all to Issue Four.



Do you remember me winning the *News of the World* Individual Darts Championship? No, neither do I, so I'll explain the accompanying photograph later in the *Newsletter*.



I am thrilled to report that Steve Beaton, the 1993 WINMAU World Master and 1996 World Professional Darts Champion and his wife Nanette are now subscribers to the *Newsletter* as is five-times Canadian Open Champion and 1986 World Masters runner-up Bob Sinnaeve, his wife Judy and their son Adam. I am also pleased to welcome Dutch darts commentator, author and 'Mastercaller' Jacques Nieuwlaat to the ever-growing list of *DDN* subscribers - more about Jacques later – and of course everyone else who has joined our happy band since Issue Three.

My two-hour stint on local radio (BBC Essex) on 11th May that I mentioned in the covering e-mail to Issue Three went very well. I was a guest on the Ray Clark Breakfast



Show between 7 a.m. and 9 a.m. where we discussed darts (of course), my new book (naturally) and even national politics. (There had been some kind of election in the UK the previous week.) I thoroughly enjoyed the experience and the producer Claire Sawyer has already asked me back to be featured again in six month's time.

In this month's edition of *DDN* I'll be taking you around the world of darts touching down (with not a grain of volcanic ash in sight) in North America, Nepal, South Africa and - of course - various parts of Europe and the UK but also talking about Cyprus and the volcanic ash that stopped the Legends.

OK. Let Issue Four begin!

FROM ISSUE THREE

(a) *We Love Darts* – History articles

In my Introduction to Issue Three I mentioned that I had been commissioned by the editor of *We Love Darts* to write a monthly darts history piece. Well, I'm pleased to tell you that my first history article for that magazine entitled '*Darts Behind Enemy Lines*' appears in the June issue. It is about darts playing in prisoner of war camps during the Second World War.



Miss Eileen Turnage (Image courtesy of Mrs. Doris Thorgood)

Next up for July will be the story of Eileen Turnage, the first lady darter to make it through to a *News of the World* Area Final. And talking of the ladies...

(b) Trina Gulliver

Due to a technical hitch of some kind the edition of BBC TV's *A Question of Sport* featuring Trina has been postponed and will now be broadcast on Friday 28th July at 7.30 p.m.

(c) Helen Scheerbaum and Della Fleetwood

Helen Scheerbaum early in her career (image courtesy of George Silberzahn)

Mention of the deaths of these two lady stalwarts of US darts in Issue Three brought back a few happy memories for that devotee of darts, Eddie Norman.



Eddie told me, “Helen visited us in Bristol in 1974 when Bob McLeod brought the USA National Team to England.” Bob ran the United States Darting Association (USDA) from New York and the annual United States Open Individual darts competition where the winner represented the USA in London at the famous *News of the World* darts tournament. (Bob had his own business Darts Unlimited and published a book under the same name in 1977 co-authored by USDA Vice President Jay D. Cohen.)

“Bob brought the USA team to play the West of England at the Mayfair Suite, Bristol,” said Eddie, “and over 2,500 tickets were sold for the match, The USA also played London and Surrey on their visit” and then Eddie revealed that “the star lady of the USA team was Helen.” Eddie described Helen as ‘a very fine lady’.

Eddie informed me that another visitor to Bristol in those early days was Della Fleetwood with her husband Tom. They were both destined to play major roles in the development of darts in the USA throughout the following three decades.

To those names Eddie added US darter Glenn Remick who passed away at the end of last year. Glenn ran the United States (Soft Tip) Darters Association which has now been taken over by his son after Glenn’s death. Eddie added, “All three of these did so much to promote the sport of darts in the USA.”

(d) Apologies to ‘The Iceman’

Do you know what? It doesn’t matter how many times I check the text of each *Newsletter* before I issue it to subscribers, errors can occur – and do. So, let me apologise to Alan ‘The Iceman’ Warriner-Little for promoting him to Chief Executive of the PDC in a photo caption on page 5 of Issue Three. Thanks to Pat Williams for pointing out the error of my ways. Alan is of course CEO of the Professional Dart Players’ Association (PDPA). However, as another subscriber said, “Never underestimate the power of Dr Darts!” (Thanks Paul.) Apparently I now owe Alan a beer or two the next time we meet.

(e) Nepal Darts Association – Wheelchair darts

In Issue Three I reported that the Nepal Darts Association (NDA) were planning that country’s first-ever wheelchair darts tournament. Sadly Dinesh Thapa, Secretary General of the NDA, contacted me recently with news of a delay.

Dinesh told me “Due to some political reasons (strike called by political parties) in Nepal, we are unable to conduct the wheelchair darts championship.” However, the good news is that members of the NDA continue to train the wheelchair darts players and the association intends to conduct the championship ‘within this month’.

Hopefully, news, results and an image or two will be available in time for publication of Issue Five.



IS DARTS IN HOLLAND IN CRISIS?



I mentioned earlier that The Netherlands' 'Mastercaller' Jacques Nieuwlaat (pictured) has subscribed to my *Newsletter*. However, Jacques brings some disturbing news about darts in his country.

Jacques tells me that darts is 'fading a bit' in The Netherlands mainly due to the lack of 'open air' (or what we might call in the UK 'terrestrial') TV coverage. He told me, "You can follow most of the PDC tournaments via Pay TV channel Sport1 but the major interest used to be in January during Lakeside on SBS6. This year Lakeside got zero minutes on TV in Holland except for Eurosport."

This seems a worrying time for darts in The Netherlands. Jacques added, "This is the last year on the TV contract with SBS6. Maybe another channel will pick it up. If not it looks like we are back to the early '90's." But Jacques is still working hard at promoting the sport in every way he can and his new online magazine is one of them. It is the brainchild of Jacques and his 'partner in crime' Leo Oldenburger. Jacques told me, "We started it in an effort to keep the attention on darts going. The website www.prodartsmagazine.nl is in Dutch but it is for free."

Jacques is looking to attract more subscribers and hopefully sponsorship will follow. I wish him well with the project and hope that his actions play a part in maintaining a high level of interest in the sport of darts in his country. Dutch darts fans SUBSCRIBE NOW!

TALKING OF SPONSORSHIP...

As the subscribers list for *DDN* increases I too am looking for increased sponsorship to enable me to continue my work of researching and writing about the glorious sport of darts.

As you all know, I already have (and am grateful to) the WINMAU Dartboard Company backing my research but to maintain the same level of research I am looking for backing from others. I am thinking primarily of a brewery, distillery or betting company but am open to any and all approaches if it means securing the future of my work (and of course) this *Newsletter*. If any one would like to talk to me about this please contact me via my website, www.patrickchaplin.com.

PHIL 'THE POWER THE POWER' TAYLOR



OK. I know I've written 'The Power' twice but he deserves it. Just when fans were becoming used to at least one nine-darter at some stage of *every* PDC event Phil Taylor produces not one but *two* nine-darters in the *same match*, the final of the Whyte & Mackay Premier League on Monday 24th May.

Back in 2005 when I was helping John Lowe write his autobiography *Old Stoneface* the man who hit the first televised nine-darter told me that the time would eventually come when so many players were hitting 'the perfect game' that changes might have to be made, say to 701-up in order to maintain interest.

I fear that this might well need to be considered shortly because Phil (who was quoted in the UK press as saying "I am not sure there are any frontiers left for me.") has now set the bar so high that others can hardly reach up to order a drink!

All power to 'The Power'!

MEANWHILE, FROM SOUTH AFRICA...

No. No! NO! This has nothing to do with the football World Cup. (Am I the only person on the planet who has no interest in football whatsoever???)

For many years BC (Before Computers) and beyond I have corresponded with darts fan Michael Everton who nowadays lives in Kenton-on-Sea, SA. I hadn't heard from him for ages – then out of the blue a few days ago he e-mailed me saying



(Photo: Michael Everton in 2007)

'I know you like the *News of the World* tournament. I would like to suggest that they donate that trophy to the BDO for them to play for again. It is just hidden away down in their storage, out of sight. If so, what is the point of that? Surely the BDO could fit it into their program, or, something similar like John Peoples Darts comps!'

I see what Michael means but I doubt personally that such a suggestion would be entertained. Apart from anything else, I fear there has been too much water under the bridge since then.

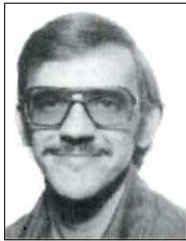
There are a number of reasons why the *News of the World* faltered after 1990. These included lack of sponsorship, a cooling down of the newspaper's ardour for darts and the fact that only fifty or so fans wrote to the *News of the World* begging for the tournament to be saved. OK, so it was resurrected in 1996 for a 'one-off' but was then suspended immediately afterwards; 'suspended' being the operative word. However, after a gap of



fourteen years I suspect that we will never see those magnificent trophies fought for again.

As Michael suggests the *News of the World* trophy is indeed stored away safely and securely in the archives as indeed is the (only twice fought for) ladies' trophy. As the photograph on page one of this *Newsletter* shows, I have had the privilege of getting up close to that marvelous trophy (and the Ladies' too).

BOB SINNAEVE BACK ON THE OCHE



BOB SINNAEVE

A 32-year-old heating contractor from Langton, Ontario, who is playing in the Embassy for the first time. Stands 5ft 7in, is slightly built and bespectacled, but is well-used to the hurly-burly of top darts. Has represented Canada in the Winmau World Masters for the past three years, and has reached the quarter-finals in 1980. Of Belgian descent.

Despite what you might read on Wikipedia, Canada's Bob Sinnaeve, five times Canadian National Champion (1979, 1983, 1986, 1987 and 1991) and runner up to Bob Anderson in the 1986 WINMAU World Masters tells me that he is back on the oche after leaving the international scene in 1992.

Bob, who was a familiar face at the Embassy World Championships during the late 80s and early 90s and in 1986 was ranked number 4 in the world. (The illustration shows details of Bob and his career which was featured in the 1982 Embassy World Professional Darts Championship programme.) After 1992 Bob continued to play for his local league but came back to serious competition last year and won singles titles in Philadelphia and Syracuse earlier this year.

Mick Beeken, editor of *Darts World* has confirmed that he will consider an article from me on Bob's career for publication in his magazine, so watch this space for more news of that.

I'VE BEEN WRITING FOR YEARS BUT...

As you all probably know I have been writing about darts for years but obviously longer than I thought when I read a report in the *Huddersfield Examiner* in April.

I had been interviewed over the telephone by a reporter about darts being banned in that town in West Yorkshire in the 1930s and, naturally, I mentioned my PhD which took me nearly twelve years to complete. However, according to the *Examiner* I 'completed a PhD on darts in England *between 1900 and 1939*'!



I know I have a special birthday coming up soon but that is ridiculous!

DARTS IN ENGLAND 1900-1939: A SOCIAL HISTORY

Some of you will recall that in June last year my book *Darts in England 1900-1939: A social history* (which was based on my PhD dissertation) was published by Manchester University Press.

I am pleased to say that Paul Seigel (aka 'Dartoid') has (one year on) published his review of the book on his website www.dartoidsworld.com on 17th May, column #390 and, as far as I am concerned it's been well worth the wait. Entitled 'Dr. Patrick Chaplin has written the Bible of darts history', I do believe he enjoyed it. Why not check it out?

Hopefully I'll have news of a cheaper, paperback version of this very expensive text some time next year.

LEGENDS SHOW CANCELLED DUE TO VOLCANIC ASH CLOUD

On 17th April, John Lowe and Eric Bristow were due to be in Cyprus for one of their 'Legends' exhibitions hosted by the Pafos Darts League but the Icelandic volcano put paid to that.

John told me, "The volcano did indeed ruin things, especially for Eric. He stayed at a hotel at Manchester airport the night before and then he rang me early on the day of departure to tell me the news. We then rebooked from Stanstead for the next day. But after spending two days at airports we had no alternative but to give up." John said that both he and Eric were bitterly disappointed. He added, "We were looking forward to the special night and a nice break from the British weather."

I understand from friends on the island that Ronnie Baxter will be the next big name in Cyprus in July as a guest of the Ministry of Defence. Perhaps the PDL can work something out to enable them to bring 'The Rocket' to Pafos.

HOLIDAY TIME (AGAIN) - CYPRUS

It wasn't until I took my first holiday on Cyprus that I realised what a lively and active darts scene there is out there. Darts there has come along in leaps and bounds, thanks mainly to the influence of British ex-pats. In Pafos Brits started a small friendly league, maybe house to house, a social thing and then the local Cypriots become involved and quite frankly darts in Pafos and across the island is now a major sport.

There are several articles on my website www.patrickchaplin.com so I won't reproduce that here. My site also includes links not only to the Pafos Darts League (PDL) website but also others including Larnaca, Limassol and Famagusta.



My personal experiences of darts in Cyprus have always been such happy ones. When I was in Pafos in 2009 I visited 'The First and Last' one of the best darting pubs in the town. It's run by darts fanatic Mick Saggs and his partner Dawn. Dawn used to play county darts for Hertfordshire and Mick is a great player too.



The photos here show me at the bar of the First and Last with (left to right) Vic Hemming (Chairman of the PDL), Mick and Terry McGovern (Vice Chairman). The second photo shows Dawn's reaction when I asked if I could be in her team!

The beer was good, the company fabulous and the holiday far too short.

I'll have more about darts in Cyprus in a future issue.

THE OLDEST DARTS LEAGUE IN THE UK...AND ELSEWHERE

Howard Miller of Riley's (the company that is currently doing so much for darts in the UK) e-mailed me in April to ask "What is the oldest known league in the UK?" Howard had discovered one in Coventry, Warwickshire which could trace its origins back to 1923.

What a cracking question!

Over the years I have found a number of darts leagues that were started in the 1920s and which are still extant today. The one Howard mentioned is the earliest I have heard of to date.

However, the important point as far as I am concerned is whether or not the Coventry league has been playing CONTINUOUSLY since 1923. Many leagues that purport to be the longest running were in fact temporarily disbanded during WW2 because a good number of team members went off to fight. The longest, continuous record of a league that played throughout WW2 is the Walton-on-the-Naze and District Darts League in Essex that was formed in 1928 and has not missed a season since.



I am still waiting to hear back from Howard about whether the Coventry team continued throughout the war but in the meantime do any of my readers know of a longer-running league in the UK? And let me spread the net even further. To those outside of the UK I ask “What is the longest-running darts league in *your* country?” Drop me a line via my website.

SPONSORS NEWS

The new venue of the WINMAU World Masters (Saturday October 30th and Sunday 31st October) has been announced. It is to be the City Hall, Hull.

COMING UP IN ISSUE FIVE

Well, that’s it for another month. Thanks for reading this far and thanks to everyone who was given me feedback on the first three issues of the *DDN*.

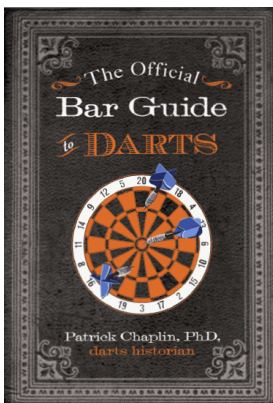
The content of Issue Five (which will be e-mailed to subscribers in early July) will include:



- An interview with former Danish darts star Per Skau. (Seen here on the front page of *Darts World* in 1993 after hitting a nine-darter at the Swiss Open.
- A *DDN* subscriber puts forward the theory that the Irish were responsible for introducing darts into Germany.
- A look forward to the Barbados Darts Festival hosted by Wayne Mardle
- News of the Swedish darts star Stefan Lord (twice winner of the *News of the World* Individual Darts Championship.
- PLUS the exclusive darts-related image I promised in Issue Three.



AND FINALLY...



At the risk of being repetitive (which of course I am being) I just thought I'd remind subscribers that my new book *The Official Bar Guide to Darts* is now available and can be ordered via Amazon.com.

Cheers for now

Patrick Chaplin

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