

DR. DARTS' NEWSLETTER

Issue 55 December 2014

Hi Everyone,

Welcome to the last *DDN*...for 2014.



This edition of *DDN* is late due to my having a publishing deadline to meet.



Finalising the text and pulling together something like 100 images and illustrations, clearing copyright, etc., for my new book is a time-consuming job. I trust you understand. Special thanks to those of you who wrote to me asking about the December issue and asking if I was OK. I'm fine.

I still had some mailing problems last month with #54 but fortunately my mailing about the *Timeshift* programme on TV picked up a good number of you who had not received the November issue. The size of *DDN* does seem to be a problem so, for the foreseeable future, *DDN* will be reduced to eight pages.

I suspect you may be wondering who that young, (false) moustachioed chap is above left celebrating the festive season. The truth is it's me way, way back in the 1980s, long before I went grey, attending a Christmas function organised by the Blue Boar (Maldon) Darts Club. My headgear (a metal Second World War army helmet adorned with advertisements and a beer pump label) known simply as 'The Helmet' was awarded to the player who had performed the worst on the oche during a competitive darts match. Clearly I had won the helmet around about Christmas time.

Do casual darts teams still hold with such traditions?

Talking of Christmas, it is that time of year again and, although I know that not all of you celebrate the season, I would like to wish you all the very merriest of Christmases and a very happy and productive 2015. Special thanks are due to David King (of Darts501.com) and Justin of the Gibraltar Darts Association (GDA) for advice and technical guidance during the year and to all *DDN* readers who have contributed in any way to the newsletter during 2014. Thanks too to my sponsor the WINMAU Dartboard Co. Ltd., for their continued support.

WORLD DISABILITY DARTS ASSOCIATION (WDDA)

Looking back on the darts scene over 2014 one of the real success stories has to be the progress being made by the World Disability Darts Association (WDDA).

Following my report in issue #54 relating to the first WINMAU-sponsored Disability Darts Championship played under the auspices of the WDDA at the WINMAU World

Masters last October, , Russ Strobel, founder of the WDDA and creator of the 137 Wildfire and Solo darts frames wrote:

Thank you Patrick for the feature on our participation in Hull in [the November] DDN. It was a very special time that I'm sure will open many doors. All frames (9) shipped to the UK were donated to disability organisations or left with WDDA administrators for demonstrations.



The first of our UK manufactured frames will be produced before Christmas and the first two will be donated to Les France for use at all future Isle of Man events. I meet with the Australian Deaf Darts Association soon who have asked the WDDA to host their first-ever World Deaf Darts Championships in April 2017. From what I understand at the moment six countries have registered their interest to send a team to Australia.

The Victorian Deaf Darts Association first made the WDDA HQ their home venue after they attended one of our Disability Days. At our HQ we have two days each week where disability organisations bring clients to play on both the Satellite and Wildfire [dart frames].

Thanks again for being so supportive.

Many of you will know that I am one of the WDDA Administrators. Even though the Association is based in Australia, I do what I can to help from my home in the UK.

In response to my article, a fellow WDDA Administrator, Warren Ackary (from New South Wales) (pictured here in festive mood a few years ago), e-mailed me to enthuse over the latest DDN and, more especially, the progress being made by the WDDA. Warren wrote:



Patrick, Another great read. As always it's an addictive newsletter...can't get enough! It's always nice to receive DDN in my inbox as there is never a dull moment when I read your newsletters!

However for me (as you being a fellow administrator would know) the article that holds a lot of passion for me is the WDDA. I was so thrilled to see the write-up and coverage as what happened at the WINMAU World Masters has created a monster! I shed tears, tears of joy when I watched the event, especially the final. The tears were good ones as I knew right then that all the questions we are asked about the Wildfire darts frame and inclusion in darts for the disabled were answered. I am humbled to be part of the Administrative Board as you are also but my heart goes out to Russ Strobel the founder/inventor.

One man's vision has given hope of inclusion to many all over the world now and their families. What Russ, with the help of WINMAU and now our UK Contact Rob Franks, has done it that he has given people who might otherwise stay at home a reason to get out and have fun or be serious again about the sport.

To give DDN readers an idea of what Rick & Phil playing the WDDA darts final on stage at the Masters in Hull has done is that my in-box was overloaded with e-mails from disabled players and people asking questions about the final, the Wildfire 137 darts frame and telling me how Russ's invention (along with the Solo Dart Frame) makes them want to play because the Wildfire would give them inclusion and give them an opportunity to play darts again, or maybe even for the first time.



When I woke up the morning after the WINMAU World Masters I had received something like 300+ emails via <http://www.world-disability-darts.org/> which come to me as the WDDA's Social Media Administrator. The Masters final video, Facebook page and hits on the Website just went viral!

I know how much this means to people with a disability.

If you want to learn more about the WDDA then please visit the website (as shown above). And if you are a disabled darter (anywhere in the world) why not make contact with the WDDA and see what help you can gain from the Association.

For my part I will continue to support Russ, Warren and the rest of my colleague Administrators in the WDDA as best I can.

NEWS OF THE WORLD – FEEDBACK

Before we leave Warren, he had further feedback relating to issue #54. He wrote:

Patrick. A fantastic read about the News of the World. It just goes to show how many people enter to work the way down to just two players as well as how far back it goes!

A shout out to those who may have 'in their loft' any News of the World programmes. If your readers go to this link on my website

<http://www.wazzasworldofdarts.com/index.php/memorabilia/miscellaneous>

they will see what I have in my collection. This is my way of showing the history of darts to people who nowadays use the 'net rather than books so if anyone wants to part with anything related they can email me via info@patrickchaplin.com and Patrick will forward them on to me. I will, of course, give credit on the item description naturally of the donor.

Thanks Warren.

Remember too that here in the UK Mick Simpson, in DDN #52, asked if there were any other 'serious NoW programme collectors,' who would like to connect with him. To date Mick has not heard from anyone (although I have put him in touch with Warren) so if you collect News of the World programmes then contact Mick at micksimo@btinternet.com and share your enthusiasm.

But before we leave Mick.

WHAT'S GOOD FOR 'DR.DARTS'...

Following my report in *DDN* #54 about my experience with the Dutch television service RTL7, Mick Simpson informed me about his own experience a decade or so ago with a Dutch TV station. Mick told me:

I used to buy tickets for the whole week at Lakeside to go and see the Embassy World Professional Darts Championships, as it was known then. In 2001 I knew it would be our last Embassy as I had started a new job. So I made a dartboard especially to raise money for youth darts. I painted it, put white card on the back ready to collect all 32 player's autographs.

I had made several of these dartboards in the past, [see example, below right] just for my own pleasure. To make them I use 6mm mdf (medium density fibre board). I draw the outside line of the dartboard, then the double wires, treble wires, and all the number segments. Then I decide what words I want to put where the numbers would go, then add the year, then the main image these are all paper that I stick on.

Once this is done I drill a hole in every piece that has to be cut out, as you look at the picture everything, that is, all wires, numbers and words. I cut everything out and leave this in place. Thus the whole board is one piece. There are no joins. I use an electric fretsaw. Some people think I laser-cut them but I don't.



After all the cutting is done I spray it then back it with black-faced card then collect the autographs and make a frame, suspend it with dart flights with Perspex® back and front they you can see front and autographs on back. These are all my own design I did a different one for each year that I went, five in total plus the one the Dutch bar owner bought. So quite unique I think.

The intention was always of getting autographs then to auction off for youth darts. During the week I was talking to the British Darts Organisation (BDO) lady who sells raffle tickets and told her if I got it signed by all players I would take it home, frame it and then donate to the BDO to raffle.

At the end of the week I still needed two autographs; a player from, I think, Finland and Barney. As ever I was standing on the top of stairs waiting for I hoped one of the two players to come out. The 'raffle lady' said she would go and get their autographs for me. Next thing she is saying to me "You have to come into the player's lounge. Dutch TV want to interview you about your dartboard."

So I told them 'live' on Dutch TV how I made it. I managed to obtain the outstanding autographs, went home, framed it, took it back on semi-finals night and gave it to the lady telling her if it did not make £50 I had somebody who would give me £50 for it for youth darts. She just smiled and said "No chance." It was auctioned off and

raised £280! I was amazed. A Dutch bar owner bought it to go in his bar. So Patrick there you go, my moment of fame. You never know, the chap who bought the board may be one of your readers.

WALES' NEWS OF THE WORLD DARTS CHAMPIONS

You will recall that in issue #54 I featured Wales' first national *News of the World* darts champion Oliver James plus I mentioned a number of Welsh Divisional winners from the very early days of the competition (the first being in 1936/37 season).

I am delighted to say that the article about Oliver, who won the title in 1954, is now included on the Red Dragon Darts website and it can be accessed via the following link:

<https://www.reddragondarts.com/news/11533/OLIVER-JAMES-WALES-FIRST-NEWS-OF-THE-WORLD-DARTS-CHAMPION-1954/>

After seeing the article about his great-grandfather and learning that his story is now available globally via Red Dragon Darts, Simon Oliver told me, "That's great news about the newsletter and the Red Dragon website. It means so much to us for Oliver to have a place on the internet. For years I have searched for Oliver James on the internet and returned no results at all. My father and I are absolutely made up."

The Red Dragon website also now includes a list of all Welsh *News of the World* Divisional champions from 1937 to 1939 (the tournament was shelved until after the war) and from the 1947/48 season, when the competition restored, until 1990 when the competition was 'suspended' and the very last *News of the World* held in 1997. I compiled the list exclusively for Red Dragon Darts and it can be found at:

<https://www.reddragondarts.com/news/11534/WALES-NEWS-OF-THE-WORLD-HALL-OF-FAME/>

There are some top names on the list including, of course, the 'Prince of Wales', (David) Alan Evans who was runner-up to Cornwall's Brian Netherton in the 1972 *News of the World* Grand Final. However, my next task is to research the career of Dave Lee the only other winner of the Wales Divisional title who went on to take the



title. Dave triumphed in 1984/85 when, playing out of the *Ivor Arms*, Pontllanfraith, Gwent, he beat the London and Home Counties Divisional champion, Billy Dunbar, 2-0 in the final. (Dave is pictured here being presented with his trophy by Page 3 model Samantha Fox.

"But Dave's not Welsh!" I hear some subscribers scream. True.

Here's the text from the *News of the World* programme for that 1985 final at Wembley Arena:

It takes a special player to win the tough Welsh Division two years running. Dave Lee's done it, and remains an outstanding bet to take our title over the border for the first time in more than 30 years – not bad for a Londoner! Dave, one of England's big

new hopes, won't lack Welsh support; he lives in Gwent, his mum's Welsh and his wife Sandra captains the Wales women's team.

I have recently written to Dave and asked for an interview. Hopefully he will grant me one. If so, then you'll see the results in a future issue of *DDN*.

STEFAN LORD

DDN subscriber Michael Bailey contacted me after I issued my e-mail about my appearance in, and assistance with, the BBC Four programme *Bullseyes and Beer: When Darts Hit Britain* a couple of weeks ago. Michael wrote, 'Thanks for your email. Can't wait for your darts programme on BBC 4. Sounds awesome. *DDN* #54 was great reading.' Then he added, "Have any of your back issues got any info about the great Stefan Lord? One of my favourite players of the 70s/80s – I wonder what happened to him? Thanks again and keep up the great work for all us legion of dart's fans. Merry Christmas.'

I thanked Michael for his kind comments about *DDN* and then turned to his question about Stefan Lord. Believe it or not I actually interviewed Stefan back in 2010 for an article I was preparing to write about the Swedish darts ace for the *Newsletter*. For some reason (unknown even to me) the article failed to materialise and I have only recently rediscovered my interview notes on file in my archive.

I intend to remedy this situation in a future *DDN*. However, to answer Michael's original question "What happened to him?" all I can do at the moment is quote from Stefan's e-mail to me dated 21st May 2010 in which he wrote, "I left darts in 1991-1992 and opened a restaurant [*in Sweden*] with darts and pool tables, that I sold two years ago [2008] and moved to Thailand. Now I am playing golf and do nothing." As for darts Stefan told me, "I don't play darts at all apart from local league games sometimes when I need a drink."



So thanks to Michael Bailey my interview with Stefan *will* finally appear in *DDN* albeit four years later than planned.

(The image (courtesy of the PC/Darts World archive) shows Stefan at a very early stage in his career. Note the name 'Jim Pike' on the scoreboard behind Stefan.)

NATHAN YOUNG

Subscriber Ron S. from Texas e-mailed me mid-summer to bring my attention to a story of an extraordinary teacher named Nathan Young. Ron wrote:

I would like to share with you a great story... I believe it would make a great article for your publication and at the same time recognize a young man for doing good and also acknowledge the generosity that has been shown him by the dart community from around the world. You see he needs all the help he can get.

Nathan Young (pictured below) is a High School Chemistry teacher in Mule Shoe, Texas here in the USA. You will find it on the map SW of Amarillo, TX along the New Mexico border. Believe me when I tell you it is in the middle of nowhere. His students are impoverished to say the least.



After school he has started a dart program for many of the kids that have trouble in school. He uses darts to not only teach the game but to teach them math skills and social skills.

In late August Nathan wrote to Ron saying, ‘School is going really well! I had a student last year that had some rough times and was a discipline problem all year for a lot of teachers come up to me and ask if I was going to still be doing the dart program. I told him if he'd come talk to me after school I had something for him. He came in and I told him I think this year was going to be much better for him and that he could pick any set of darts I had. Needless to say he took straight to your [Ron's] darts and you should have seen the grin on his face, and this coming from a kid I didn't see smile once all last year. Your darts were the first to go!’

So there's a heart-warming story for the festive season! *DDN* readers can follow Nathan's story on a number of website forums including Darts Nutz at <http://www.dartsnutz.net>. And talking of good stories...

SCOTT NEEDHAM BULLIES THE POWER

Another heart-warming story, this time submitted by Stuart, the proud father of Scott Needham, 26, from Boundary Park, Oldham, Lancashire, England. Scott has the condition *nystagmus* (commonly termed ‘eye wobble’). His father told me,

During ‘An Evening with Phil Taylor’ held in Stockport on 21st November 2014 my son Scott was invited to play darts against Phil ‘The Power’ Taylor, thanks to the generosity of another guest, Brian O’Hare, who gave Scott his ticket he had won from the select few that were given out.

Scott was fourth on the list to play and when the MC called out Scott's name, he walked to the oche, to the sound of the crowd applauding, to meet ‘The Power.’ The MC explained to the fans that the match would be played to Scott's rules. This meant that Phil played the regular 501 and Scott 301 with no double finish needed for Scott, and if Scott scored a bullseye at any time during the game, he would win the game outright.



After a couple of rounds with Phil throwing in the hundreds, Scott lined up his throw. His first dart hit a single 19 and then his second dart hit the bullseye and the MC called it “Game Shot and the Match to Scott Needham” - Game Over – Scott had won!

Phil was fantastic in congratulating Scott on his winning achievement and said, "Well done Scott." The crowd was in raptures. I was so proud of what Scott had achieved. He really tries to concentrate, which is not easy, especially because he has nystagmus. You couldn't have written the script any better.

Stuart went on to explain,

Last year, Scott was made an honorary member of the Stockport College Darts Academy. We try to attend at least once a week to one of the practice sessions. Early this year, the darts coach at the Academy Paul McDonagh set Scott a challenge to see if he could finish fifty games before the end of July by hitting a centre bull when he plays against the other academy members playing to 'Scott's Rules.'

Scott achieved this with three weeks to spare. After the challenge games, Phil also kindly presented Scott with the trophy he won by winning the fifty games of darts on the Bulls Eye finish challenge.

Congratulations to Scott and thanks to his dad Stuart for bringing Scott's story to my attention. (Image of Scott with Phil Taylor © The Needham Family. Used with permission.)

AND FINALLY...



I simply cannot end this *DDN* without reminding you all that my DR. DARTS flights, produced by WINMAU as part of their 'Rhino Long Life' range, (see image, left) will be generally available from the start of 2015. Needless to say I'm thrilled to bits... and of course my books *180! Fascinating Darts Facts* and *The Official Bar Guide to Darts* and the book based on my PhD *Darts in England 1900-39: A social history* are all still on sale. (Contact me for details of signed copies.)

OK. That's it for another year. Now, of course, we can all look forward to the holidays which at this time of year means *two* world darts championships. Enjoy!

MY DARTS RESEARCH IS SPONSORED BY



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