

DR. DARTS' NEWSLETTER

Issue 66 November 2015



BEN IS BACK!

Great news for darts fans in North America (and across the rest of the globe) is the return of *Bull's-Eye News* magazine. For reasons explained on the *BEN* website the print version of the magazine was suspended in May/June 2013; a suspension necessary as a result of medical reasons, specifically, as founder Jay Tomlinson explains, 'it became necessary for my wife and I to become full-time care givers to my father and mother...'



Since then Jay has continued to not only maintain the *BEN* website but also to seek new partners/ owners for *Bull's-Eye News* in order to ensure the future of the magazine which has been supplying darts fans with news from the

USA, Canada and elsewhere for 34 years. In his final 'From the Publisher' introduction to the November/December *BEN* Jay tells his readers, 'I am pleased to say that Maximum Multimedia Publishing Inc. with Rick Smith and Catherine Haycock, are the new partners and owners of *Bull's-Eye News*.' Jay has agreed to help with the transition and added, 'Rick and Catherine bring new energy, technical skills, dedication and the enthusiasm to take *Bull's-Eye News* into this new technological world both in print and electronically.'

Personally I wish to thank Jay for his sterling work over more than three decades to bring North America's darts news to fans all over the world and wish Rick and Catherine every success as the new owners of *Bull's-Eye News*.

The print version has been reinstated from November/December and features on the front cover Darin Young, winner of the \$20,000 PDC Spectacular held at the Ambassador Hotel and Conference Centre, Kingston, Ontario, Canada on 23rd August. (Darin beat Larry Butler 3-2 in the final.)

The return of the print version of *BEN* is very impressive being full colour and full of reports and information and is a must for all darts fans. For more information go to the *BEN* website www.BullsEyeNews.com and tell Catherine and Rick that 'Dr. Darts' sent you.

Welcome back *BEN*!

DR. DARTS AND THE MEDIA

Back in August I was interviewed at length at my home by Mark Crossley of Talksport radio. The project was a two-hour programme on the history and

development of the sport of darts, then untitled, and although Mark initially wanted me to talk about the history of darts, our interview extended into all aspects of the sport. Originally planned for the end of August, and featuring stars of the sport such as Phil Taylor and Bobby George plus prime movers such as the Professional Darts Corporation's Barry Hearn, all interviews were integrated into the programme that was eventually broadcast on Saturday 5th September.

Called *Golden Arrows* the programme was led by darts fan and British TV personality Richard Osman. To listen to the programme go to the following link

<http://talksport.com/radio/listen-again/1441540800>

EDDIE BROWN and WALLY SEATON

In response to the Eddie Brown obituary published in last month's *DDN* one subscriber commented, 'Eddie sounded like a good player, but preferred to stick to farming as his main job. Sounds a bit like Scotty Dog?' Indeed the current BDO World Champion Scott 'Scotty Dog' Mitchell has stuck to farming whilst still playing the sport he loves.

That comment made me recall the time I interviewed Walter (Wally) Seaton (the 1967 *News of the World* champion and the Eastern Division champion) way back in 1992. He was also from East Anglia - the Isle of Ely in Cambridgeshire - and his attitude was *exactly* the same as Eddie Brown's. In the very briefest of telephone interviews Wally told me that, at the time, "I wasn't all that interested in the *News of the World*. I was busy harvesting."

Walter was described in the 1967 *News of the World* programme as a 42-year-old



landworker who 'got to these finals the hard way.' The reason for that comment was because in his very first game in the Eastern Counties finals at Ipswich, Suffolk, (Wally was the Cambridgeshire & West Norfolk Area champion) he was drawn against – Yes, you've guessed it – Eddie Brown; a player strongly tipped to take the trophy again that year. The Grand Finals programme notes recorded

that Wally 'accounted for Eddie by two legs to nil, breezed through one of his semi-final legs in 15 darts and raced to Divisional victory to emerge a very real threat to today's field.'

Now, if I recall correctly, programme notes are pretty unreliable when it comes to predicting results but in this case the writer was absolutely right. In front of a post-war record-breaking crowd of 8,000 darts fans, Wally (pictured above, on the left, receiving his Divisional trophy from John Cobbold, Director of Tollemache &

Cobbold Breweries, Ltd., at St. Matthew's Baths Hall, Ipswich on Thursday 9th March 1967) decimated the field at the Alexandra Palace on Saturday 22nd April. Playing out of the *Swan*, Parson Drove, Isle of Ely, Cambridgeshire he beat the Midland Counties Divisional Champion, Brian Quarterman (representing the *Ivy Inn*, North Littleton, near Evesham, Worcestershire) 2-0 in the final.

After receiving the huge *News of the World* trophy from UK comedian Bob Monkhouse, Wally was recorded as saying, "I've worked hard for this."

FEEDBACK FROM GUYANA AND SEATTLE

Recent subscriber Roland, from Guyana, has contacted me to say how much he is enjoying *DDN*. He writes:

Thank you so very much for sending me your latest Darts Magazine.

It was fantastic to receive it and especially to read my name in as a welcome. Thank you. I have not had my name in print ever before. I am proud.

It is a wonderful magazine and I am so grateful to receive it. It is so great to read about darts players we have not heard of from so far away. Eddie [Norman] told us you were a great writer on darts. This has surely proved his point.

I have been reading your website as Eddie said it would 'darts educate' us here and it certainly has. A new wave of darts interest is spreading here in the West Indies.

We call Eddie the 'Darts Schoolteacher.' He has done so much to teach us about darts. He is a person extraordinaire when it comes to darts. We learnt a great deal from Eddie on his visits and we are learning a great deal from your wonderful self through the darts magazine.

Eddie told us all about your knowledge on darts. He makes it sound so fascinating.

Thank you.

And, from Seattle, Glen Huff (pictured below, right) wrote:

This issue is fantastic! Well done! I so look forward to your newsletters each month and really enjoy them and learn so much from them.

Thank you for including the news about Eddie Brown having passed away. The News of the World must've been really special. I can't imagine playing all the way from local rounds up to regional rounds and then [to the Grand Finals in London] with 10,000 folks in the hall.

Re: Service Brand darts ... I don't know anything about the brand. I did manage to win a bid on eBay about two months ago for six sets of them in the original boxes. One of them was hexagonal like the one in your picture. One set looked like a one-piece



dart, old lead weighted wooden barrel with the 'H' lead morticed into the wooden barrel. The other sets were brass barrels with push-in turkey feather flights. I do know that per Stanley Lowy MBE of Unicorn that Unicorn developed and patented the plastic screw-in adaptor for feather flights, after WWII when plastics were available. These darts not being Unicorn they don't have the screw-in adaptor, so might even be pre-WWII.

Enjoyed reading about the Schofield weights and dimensions. Have a few sets of the Light and one Medium ... don't have any of the Heavy ones. Surprising how accurate they are. Have a set of light ones in original Schofield box Also Jim Pike's with cane shafts in unopened blue and white box from 1960's...

Enjoyed your question about which tournament was hardest to win. I've never won any except occasionally winning a friendly game at the pub! But taking from what I've read from John Lowe and Eric Bristow MBE who both felt that the old NAODT [the North American Open Darts Tournament] in Las Vegas was one of the hardest to win, I'll side with John and Eric. I did go to the NAODT for about 20 years but never made it past the first match in any of the games I played. Best of 3 games 301, double on, double off, and I always got taken 2 games straight.

Fun anyways!!

Thanks for your feedback Roland and Glen. As regards the NAODT, Glen is right that Eric Bristow and John Lowe have both stated that it was amongst the most difficult tournaments to win. John went one step further and told readers of his autobiography *Old Stoneface* that the NAODT was *the* most difficult, calling the event 'relentless darts' and 'not for the faint-hearted' where just one slip reduced a darter from player to spectator.

(Note: The revised and updated paperback of *Old Stoneface* published in 2009 is still available. For details go to www.johnblakepublishing.co.uk.)

COLLECTING DARTS MAGAZINES

Over my many years of collecting darts ephemera I have accumulated many examples of darts magazines from all over Europe (including Holland, Belgium, Germany, Finland, Norway and Switzerland), the USA and Canada, Australia, South Africa, Russia, the Czech Republic and elsewhere.

Apart from my complete collection of *Darts World* magazines and copies of the 1940s newspaper *The Dart*, my prize possession is a copy of the one-off magazine *180!* (The Official Magazine of the Professional Darts Corporation (PDC)) that appeared in January 2009 to coincide with that year's PDC Ladbrokes.com World Darts Championship. The PDC's Dave Allen told me back in 2010, "The 180 magazine was a one-off done by us at the PDC. We were looking at launching a magazine (this was before *We Love Darts* came along) but the PDC Board decided against further issues of the magazine."

Magazine titles include *Shanghai* (England), *Bull's-Eye News*, *The Darthead*, *Dart Starr* and *Darts Gazette* (all USA), *Dartline* (Germany), *Dartsport* (Denmark),

I was wondering whether either Barry Twomlow (pictured below, right) or Tom Barrett could lay claim to being the first full time pro. I'm not sure about Barrett but certainly Barry Twomlow was a full time professional under the title Ambassador for Unicorn soon after his News of the World win in the 1968/69 tournament. He travelled the world for Unicorn as their professional and was paid a full wage every week until his death a few years ago.



If you exclude Pike and Hitchcock as being part time then Twomlow must surely be considered.

Following receipt of Dave's e-mail I wrote to Stanley Lowy MBE whose father Frank founded Unicorn Products back in the late 1930s to ask for his views. Stanley replied:

As far as I know and believe to be the case, Tom Barrett was the first Dart Champion to visit the USA when he came with me to attend a Trade Show in Chicago and after the show visited some cities where he gave demonstrations in Department Stores. A year later he came with me a second time. The third year, when we wished to repeat the trip, he could not get time off work to come.

Having met Barry Twomlow when he won the News of the World, and knowing that he was working for his brother-in-law and was likely to be able to get time off, I asked Barry whether he could come to the USA for 10 days or so. He agreed.

As the show progressed I could see that Barry was a natural showman as well as being a first class dart player and a true gentleman. The morning after the show ended we were having breakfast in the Palmer House Hotel, Chicago when I asked Barry whether he would like to work for Unicorn. The job I offered to him was as a Sales Representative as I did not think we could or should afford a full-time darts player. I assumed that most of the time he would be seeing customers and seeking orders and when we had need for a demonstration then he could do that too.



After a short time he was off the order-taking so frequently and on for the demonstrations that he became a full-time Darts Ambassador and the rest, as they say, is history.

So Dave Whitcombe, [pictured, left] another fine dart player, is right.

That sounds like an air-tight case to me but wait. Before I declare Barry Twomlow to be the first *full-time* professional darts player are there any other nominations?

Perhaps some readers of *DDN* who were there back in the day can remember seeing Barry play or perhaps were even introduced to darts by 'The Ambassador of Darts.' He toured extensively in the USA and Canada so perhaps our friends 'across the pond' have memories they would like to share of meeting Barry.

If so, please send your memories to me at info@patrickchaplin.com or via my website www.patrickchaplin.com.

DARTS. SKILLS. TACTICS. TECHNIQUES.

Thanks to all those who have already purchased my new book *Darts. Skills. Tactics. Techniques*. One reader who doesn't have to do that is Nick Dunning of Ontario, Canada who won a signed copy in the competition I ran in the September issue. The answer to the competition was **Mick Simpson**.



I've received some great reviews of my book, the most detailed of which is that by David King at Darts501.com. Check out David's revised and updated website whilst you check out his review.

Due to lack of space this month I am unable to include the other reviews but will do so in the December *DDN*. However, with the festive season approaching I cannot resist mentioning that *Darts. Skills. Tactics. Techniques*. would make a great present for any and all darts fans.

All the details you need can be found at my publisher's website, www.crowood.com or by e-mailing me at info@patrickchaplin.com. Signed copies, with the dedication of your choice, are only available via me, so please e-mail me for details.

WINMAU WORLD MASTERS AND DISABILITY DARTS

For the second year the WINMAU World Masters at Hull included the World Disability Darts Association (WDDA) World Masters Championship. As last year it was a tightly fought contest, the final being between the 2014 winner, England's Ricky 'The Trickster' Chilton and Belgium's Vince 'Vinnie' D'Hond.

Ricky, 42, from St. Ives, Cornwall, started playing darts at the age of 18 for local pub leagues. At the age of 14 he had been diagnosed with Ewings Sarcoma, an aggressive form of bone cancer, and had his hip and femur replaced by titanium prosthesis which saved his life. In 2007, following complications with the prosthesis, Ricky had his left hip, pelvis and leg amputated.

Vince, from Passendale, Belgium, started playing darts aged 12, winning several junior competitions. His best results include ninth place in the 1995 Dutch Open and winning the Menesae Super Darts title in 1995. In 2002 Vince became paralysed following a fall from a ladder at work.



This year's event was organised by Sarah Smale, the WDDA's UK Tournament Director and her colleagues and what a great job they did. Both finalists played extremely well before an appreciative crowd at the City Hall, Hull. The final was played out in some style on the Masters stage with Vinnie coming out the winner 2-0. The image above shows Vinnie the winner (left) with runner-up Ricky. (Images © BDO and DG Media. Used with permission.)

I witnessed not only the on-stage final but also the earlier rounds and the sheer determination of all the players involved to win against the odds has left a lasting impression on me. They all had a mind-set to succeed that perhaps we, more able-bodied players, could never fully understand.

Congratulations then to the WDDA, the players and, of course, to the WINMAU Dartboard Co. for sponsoring this vitally important darts event which really does prove that darts is for all. For more information about the WDDA check out www.world-disability-darts.org.

AND FINALLY...

My sincere and heart-felt congratulations to Sally Hood, daughter of the famous English darts and dartboard manufacturer Jack Hood, for achieving her **100th birthday** last month. During my early years of darts research I tried hard to find out any information I could about Jack Hood but failed miserably until more than a



decade ago, Sally's daughter Sally Garner contacted me having seen her grandfather's name on my website. Sally Hood had been living in New Zealand since the 1950s. No wonder I couldn't track the family down!

Thanks to Sally Hood's memories and numerous exchanges of e-mails, I was able to construct a history of Jack Hood's business that

I was able to include in the 'Darts Industry' chapter of my PhD, a chapter which best impressed my external examiners back in December 2006.

The image shown here (courtesy of the Hood family and reproduced with permission) shows a young Sally Hood playing stooge to her father Jack in a 1930s exhibition.

MY DARTS RESEARCH IS SPONSORED BY



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