

DR. DARTS' NEWSLETTER

Issue 72

May 2016



WINMAU CELEBRATES 70th ANNIVERSARY!

WINMAU, the world's leading darts brand (and sponsor of my research) celebrates its 70th anniversary this year and with it comes a fabulous competition *exclusive* to *DDN* subscribers; more of which later.

WINMAU is a company steeped in history, and the beginnings of the most pioneering company in darts started in 1946 when Harry Kicks used his demob money to set up a business in London's bomb-damaged East End manufacturing elm dartboards called Kicks Bros. The company was renamed WINMAU – an amalgamation of the first three letters of Harry's wife's first two names, WINifred MAUd – in the mid-1970s (a name which very conveniently is pronounced 'win more'). Back then, his father painted the colours and numbers by hand, and Harry's first customer was the Watney Brewery.



In the 1960s, the company moved into the production of bristle dartboards which carried the name WINMAU. Ever since, WINMAU has been at the forefront of darts innovation and is respected the world over for its attention to detail and unrivalled product quality. WINMAU's development of the dartboard typifies the company's drive to push boundaries. WINMAU dartboards have been the official equipment of choice for the British Darts Organisation (BDO) since 1973 and are used exclusively in more than 800 BDO events each year, including the Embassy (then Lakeside) World Championships and the world's oldest major darts tournament – the WINMAU World Masters.

The launch of the Blade model dartboard in 1997 was a pivotal moment and changed the face of dartboard manufacturing forever. The current version, the Blade 4 Dual Core, is the fifth phase of innovation and has set the standard as the sport's most advanced and durable dartboard.

Today, based in Bridgend, South Wales, the company, is not only the world's leading and most televised darts brand, but also the largest manufacturer of premium bristle dartboards and military grade tungsten darts.

BDO Chairperson Sue Williams said: "WINMAU is simply the biggest brand in darts, and they have a reputation for quality that is second-to-none. They truly are the force behind the sport. Our relationship with and endorsement of WINMAU has endured for more than forty years because we share a common vision of encouraging and supporting darts at all levels from grass roots to the professionals. WINMAU have been a key supporter of youth, ladies and disability



darts, and no other company has their passion and drive to continue to offer players across the board the opportunities to compete at the highest level.”

Although the WINMAU name is synonymous with the best dartboards in the world, the company today provides a full range of premium quality products that span the entire spectrum of the game and are exported to more than 100 countries. Its military grade tungsten darts, including the iconic Stratos Dual Core and Diamond models, are used by millions of amateur and professional players across the globe.

Today the company sponsors an international stable of more than 40 professional players (including current World Champions Trina Gulliver (pictured right) and Scott Waites) and their players hold 20 World Championship titles between them. Established in 1974, the WINMAU World Masters is the oldest major tournament in the worldwide game and is unique in its ability to offer men, women, youth and disabled players a global platform to showcase their talents.



In addition to its 40-plus year relationship with the BDO, WINMAU has developed partnerships with most major leading darts organisations globally, and the company has helped champion the sport through its support of the World Disability Darts Association, the British Disability Darts Association, the Junior Darts Corporation, the Ladies Darts Organisation and the Webcam Darts Association.

WINMAU’s Sales and Marketing Director, Ian Flack (pictured below left) told *DDN*

“Darts has become a worldwide phenomenon and we are proud that, with 70 years of heritage, we have been a major part of that history. Our longevity is based on a foundation of revolutionary thinking and an unrivalled passion for the game. We have had so many new and exciting products, ideas and concepts over the years, and it is this pursuit of always striving to find even the smallest advantage to help players improve their game that keeps us pushing forward.”



The landscape has changed massively over the course of 70 years, and we are proud to be at the pinnacle of the current digital age with initiatives such as Winmau TV. Who knows where darts will be in another 70 years, but we’ll be doing our best to continue being at its forefront.”

APRIL FOOLISHNESS

I trust you all enjoyed my ‘Crazy’ lead article in last month’s issue. It was, of course, an April Fools Day joke. I appreciate that not all countries in which *DDN* circulates recognise such a day but I hope that didn’t spoil your enjoyment of issue #71.

For those who have subscribed since last month my fabricated story was that the European Union (EU) bureaucrats had ruled that, with immediate effect, the highest scoring point on a dartboard must be the centre which implied that the treble 20, 19, 18 and 17 had to be removed (see left).



Judging by the amount of feedback I received the 'Crazy' piece went down exceptionally well. Ad K. from Holland wrote 'That was a good one on the first of April,' whilst three-times World Darts Champion John Lowe e-mailed 'Great Fools Day Classic!'

Steve D. from the USA declared, "Lol!! Almost had me!! Then I saw the date on the newsletter!! April Fools to you too sir!!" whilst Brian M. told me, "That was mean! But well played sir, well played!" Even the legendary darts referee Freddie Williams rang to say "Patrick. You had me going for a couple of minutes."

But I did catch a few of you. One subscriber wrote, "Hi Patrick. Once again most informative, interesting and enjoyable. As for the opening comments I see why many people will be voting against being in the EU!"

Steve S. e-mailed, "Very Funny Patrick. My mate here in the office took it hook, line and sinker. "The bl**dy EU are at it again!" He's mad as a wasp. I'm just agreeing with him..."

Another subscriber initially e-mailed me saying

With regards to regulation 1420/16 seems to me yet another good reason to exit the EU. I would say that darts should be considered to be different from the target sports of rifle and pistol shooting because they require a weapon to fire at the target and archery requires a bow, but us dart players like a knife thrower propel the object with the use of the hand, no weapon involved. The rule intended is stupid and should be ignored even if introduced as the right for prisoner's to vote was by our government has been.

But then shortly afterwards he sussed out that it was all a bit of April foolishness on my part. However, that's an excellent point he makes about darts being 'different' from other target sports. What do other subscribers think?

From the USA another subscriber vented his anger at the mere suggestion of such a change. He wrote:

*I read with interest your opening article in the April- #71 Newsletter. So, considering the consequences of passing such a rule, can the **Professional** game of darts survive if the Sport of Darts does not comply with the ruling? Will sponsors elect not to support the sport as is? That's a question that will need to be addressed.*

I'm surprised the only suggested solution was to remove the Triple 20, 19, 18, 17 wedges. If this regulation comes to pass, one needs simply to increase the value of

the bullseye beyond 60 points. Whether it's 70/35, 62/31 or even 100/50 no change to the manufacturing of the dartboard would be required. Sure, it changes the game's strategies and all the historical records, and that would be a shame.

Another subscriber from North America wrote

After reading the article CRAZY it certainly reflects the stupidity that surrounds the European Union. That said however I can see what they are trying to do, but I think you overthought it! It would only require the bull and outer ring to change values such as 50 and 100 to make it the highest one dart score that way all the other values stay exactly the same. I personally would not like or agree with that because any change like that will affect how the games are played. Why can they not leave things alone, as it stands DARTs are GREAT FUN as they are. IS THIS WHERE DARTS SHOULD GO?

A leading light in the darts industry wrote

Pat, another superb April 1st Edition. I'd love to spend more time catching up about this month's plethora of great features, but I'm booked on an early morning flight to Brussels for a hearing on Directive 1420/16 at the European Court for Darters Rights.

That's the spirit!

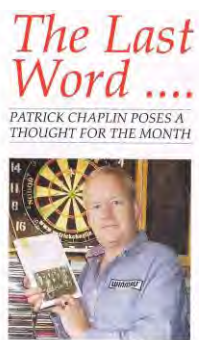
He then added, "I thought your article was absolutely brilliant, drawing on the current political climate surrounding the EU!"

Former *Darts World* contributor and good friend, Wayne Baker, e-mailed me "Patrick, Loved the "exclusive" on new Euro law," adding, "Would the fact released in Darts World be linked? Looking forward to follow up stories in the Nationals."

Wayne was alluding to the fact that I had also written a companion piece for the April issue of *Darts World* magazine in my monthly feature *The Last Word*.

So that *DDN* readers do not miss out on my second piece of April foolishness, I reproduce in full the text below.

'Whilst the UK continues to struggle over whether or not to stay in the EU, I have some crazy news for you that might well help you decide. I can exclusively reveal to *Darts World* readers that, unbeknown to darts players and manufacturers across Europe, behind the scenes in Brussels a new EU regulation is being considered which threatens to undermine the civil rights of everyone who owns a set of darts and takes them out to play with in pubs, clubs and leisure centres.



The Last Word

PATRICK CHAPLIN POSES A THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH

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Regulation 610240/16, drafted by the EU Commissioner for Sports and Games being considered today states that, in order to comply with the European Commission's Health and Safety Regulations, in future all sets of darts (of whatever construction) must be stored securely in a metal box measuring a minimum of 16 cms x 8 cms x 3 cms and a maximum of 16 cms x 8 cms x 3 cms with metal inserts that do not allow the darts to move or make any noise whatsoever whilst in transit.

In addition, each box must be locked at all times except when the darts are in use.

The Commissioner for Sports and Games, Sweden's Olaf Pilla, has stated that such a regulation, along with others planned for the sports sector, will also help ease the current crisis over the shortage of plastic in the European Community.

Condemnation of this planned resolution has been swift. One professional player told me: "I've enough trouble keeping my smart phone from popping out of my trousers. Heaven only knows what would happen if I had to carry a metal darts case too. It's daft. Really daft."

A prominent member of the darts industry said: "People are used to carrying their darts, flights and other accessories in a flat or folding, well-constructed plastic or leatherette pouch. This resolution, if approved, will take us back to the Stone Age."

When interviewed, Commissioner Pilla stated: "This new regulation forms a vital part of a whole raft of measures designed to ensure a standardisation of procedures, processes, and play within the overall competencies expected of darts by the EU Sports and Games Commission whilst, at the same time, adhering to and satisfying the EU's overall concerns for health and safety of both players and spectators."

I for one sincerely hope that the EU Commissioner sees the error of his ways and nips this absurdity in the bud before it wreaks havoc with our sport.

Dr Patrick Chaplin
Author and Darts Historian
www.patrickchaplin.com

Regulation 61024010 drafted by the EU Commissioner for Sports and Games being considered *today* states that

In order to comply with the European Commissions' Health and Safety Regulations, in future all sets of darts (of whatever construction) must be stored securely in a metal box measuring a minimum of 16 cms x 8cms x 3cms and a maximum of 18cms x 8cms x 3cms with metal inserts that do not allow the darts to move or make any noise whatsoever whilst in transit. In addition each box must be locked at all times except when the darts are in use.

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Ashley D. e-mailed me saying, "Hi Patrick. As always I've read your piece in the current Darts World. Please tell me the item is an April Fools gag and not for real." I was able to put Ashley's mind at rest.

So that's the foolishness over for another year. I hope you all enjoyed it.

CRICKET DARTS

Also in #71 I referred to an article from an issue of *Hobbies Weekly* dated 8th May 1957 titled 'Cricket Darts'.

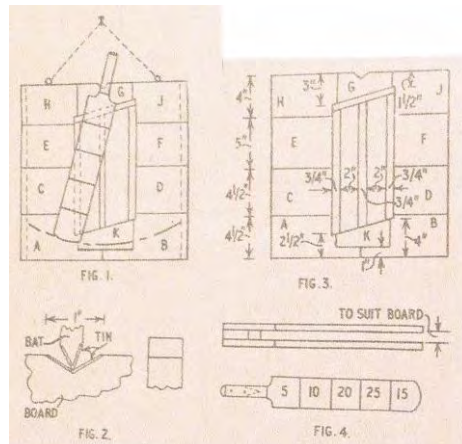
Hobbies Weekly always featured any number of things (practical or otherwise) that its subscribers could make, mainly from wood. In that issue 'T.H.M.' described how to make a cricket dartboard.

(Parts of the plans of the construction of the cricket dartboard are shown below.)

I was very surprised when a number of subscribers, clearly fascinated by my article, wrote requesting more details.

Daz from the darts forum DartsNutz wrote “Just had a quick scan of the cricket board article, that looks very interesting, would be great to see if someone could make that, could be good fun.”

Legendary darts writer George Hakim requested a copy of the full plans and on receipt replied “Thanks for the cricket information. Will try to make it if I can find the required materials to do so.”



Gary McR wrote

I read with great interest about the Hobbies Weekly cricket darts board. I think that would be a very unusual and challenging board to make with the correct balance a small clock motor could keep the bat swinging during a complete match.

Would it be possible to acquire the plans? I would love to make one for my recreation room. I can hardly wait to build one and spring it on my dart buddies after a few drinks! I think this will be a hoot to play on.

And subscriber Scott Harrison from Austin, Texas has already started work on making the *Hobbies Weekly* cricket dartboard.

I wish George, Gary and Scott all the best and look forward to receiving photographs of their endeavours in due course.

MARTIN FITZMAURICE

Legendary darts MC and referee Martin Fitzmaurice has died aged 75. I first met Martin in a café in Colchester, Essex many years ago where he encouraged me to pursue my research of the history of our sport. He also introduced me to a good number of the important people in darts at that time.

A message from the British Darts Organisation Chairman Sue Williams posted on the BDO website read

It is with great sadness that I have to inform the darts world of the passing, today, of Martin Fitzmaurice.

Martin was the face of the BDO for more than two decades. He was known throughout the darting world as the Fatman which was the affectionate term used by his many friends and colleagues. His catchphrase of "Let's Play Darts" was known throughout the world and was used to start every darts match where he was the MC. Lakeside was where he made his name and the picture below depicts one of his proudest moments when his two favourite players were crowned World Champions together on the Lakeside stage. Martin Adams and Trina Gulliver MBE were his

adopted son and daughter from the darts world; he was their father figure.

The BDO send their heartfelt condolences to his four daughters and his grandchildren. He was a big man with an even bigger heart who lived for the Sport of Darts. He will live on in all our memories. When he stood on the stage with a microphone in his hand he became a different person and loved nothing better than to connect with his audience.



Goodnight and God Bless, Martin as you join your friends in the darting family that will be waiting for you up in the sky.

Martin's funeral will take place at Colchester Crematorium on 4th May.

RIP Martin.

ERIC BRISTOW'S CAREER – CAN YOU HELP?

Long-time *DDN* subscriber Phil Barrow, who has spent a great amount of time researching the career of Eric Bristow has written to me

Hi Patrick. In my never ending quest to gain results for Eric Bristow's career, I was wondering if you had a list of contacts for overseas. I need results (not just winners/runners-up) for North American Open, Swedish, Danish, Canadian and Finnish Opens. If you have people I could contact, I'd appreciate it greatly.

I know there must be hundreds if not thousands of Bristow fans out there but how many have taken such a keen interest in The Crafty Cockney's match statistics worldwide?

If you can help Phil, please contact him direct at philezra883@gmail.com.

EXCLUSIVE WINMAU 70th ANNIVERSARY COMPETITION

As mentioned earlier in this issue the folks at WINMAU have kindly put together an *exclusive* prize for one lucky *DDN* subscriber to celebrate the company's 70th anniversary.

It comprises no less than *seventy* items from the current WINMAU catalogue. There is no space to list everything here; just take a look at the image below and see what you might win.

HERE'S WHAT YOU CAN WIN...



To stand a chance of winning this amazing prize just answer this simple question, the answer to which can be found in this issue.

Question: What is the name of the Sales and Marketing Director at WINMAU?

To enter send your answer to me at patrick.chaplin@btinternet.com ensuring that you quote the letter shown in the subject line of the e-mail which accompanied this issue of *DDN* ('A', 'AA', 'B', etc.). If the letter is not included your entry will be disqualified. (This ensures only *DDN* subscribers enter.) The closing date for entries is midday on 31st May 2016.

GOOD LUCK!

MY DARTS RESEARCH IS SPONSORED BY



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