

DR. DARTS' NEWSLETTER

Issue 78

October 2016



THE DARTS CHAMPION AND THE GUINNESS LITHOGRAPHS



'My company are planning to distribute a number of auto-lithographs to public houses, working men's clubs etc. The subjects of these lithographs are to be taken from the Guinness Book of Records. This book, which has been published in very large quantities, is a collection of facts, which give the superlatives in many different fields...'

In 1956 [writes Emma Mason] Tommy Marks, advertising manager at Guinness Breweries, wrote this in a letter to twelve artists commissioning them to create publicity images for the new Guinness Book of Records, first published in 1955. The images became known as The Guinness Lithographs. The twelve artists, many connected to the Royal College of Art (RCA), were Edwin La Dell, Edward Ardizzone, Barnett Freedman, Bernard Cheese, Ronald Glendening, Brian Robb, David Gentleman, Alistair Grant, Richard Guyatt, Leonard Rosoman, Rosamund Steed and Carel Weight.

Each artist chose a subject to illustrate from the Guinness Book of World Records. The prints were destined to hang in smoke-filled pubs and working-men's clubs of the 1950s and -60s and so needed to be bold and colourful and they had to appeal to audiences by depicting a subject matter that might be debated over a drink or two. As such the themes of darts, horse racing, pigeon racing, football and fishing were among the subjects chosen.

Artist Barnett Freedman (1901-1958) known as a master of lithography oversaw the project. His lithograph *The Darts Champion* is a wonderful image. In the first Guinness Book of Records the records for darts included fastest round the board, fastest match, greatest crowd and most titles with Jim Pike listed as holding the records at the time. In the book there is a photograph of Jim Pike at Birmingham in 1952 recording the fastest match of three games of 301 in two and half minutes. Barnett Freedman's image may not though be Jim Pike. Thanks to Darts Historian Dr Patrick Chaplin we know that Jim Pike never sported a moustache and so the image in Freedman's lithograph has more of a resemblance to Pike's adversary Joe Hitchcock [pictured, above right].



This image of The Darts Champion and the other prints in The Guinness Lithographs provide a glimpse of our social history, capturing as they did the everyday life of the people at the time. They are as appealing now as they would have been over fifty years ago.

Emma Mason

You can read the full story in Emma's new book '*Who? What? When? The Story of The Guinness Lithographs*', £15.00 available to buy at: www.emmamason.co.uk. You can also purchase original prints including *The Darts Champion* at the same website. You can also visit the exhibition: *Prints for the Pub: The Guinness Lithographs* at Pallant House Gallery, Chichester, West Sussex, 19th October 2016 – 15th January 2017.

Thanks Emma.

DARTS PATCHES

Tom McBride from Philadelphia, PA., contacted me via my website. He wrote:

I have a patch of the World Masters Individual Darts Championship 1974. Given to me years ago by a fellow Quaker City English Dart League (QCEDL), Philadelphia, darter. How many of these were made, d'you know? Thanks.



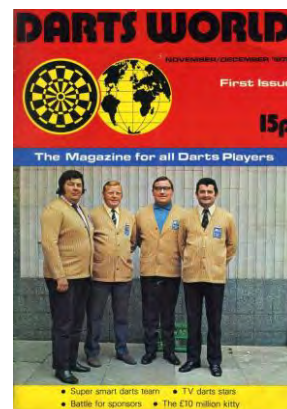
The only man who could possibly answer that question is Dr. Eddie Norman who was the organiser of the original Phonogram World Masters back in 1974. He told me:

Hi Patrick, I can tell you exactly how many of those patches were made. It was 250. That was all I could afford!! 200 were ordered and there was an over run of fifty which were given free gratis. I never thought they would sell. Each player was given two each. There was also 100 pin badges

made for the 1974 World Masters, which went on general sale on the day. These also sold in an hour or so.

The rest of the patches amazingly sold out in about an hour and a half at the West Centre Hotel. People were so desperate for them offering three or four times the face value on the day but no one seemed to want to sell theirs. I had a couple myself until a year or so ago but gave them away to a patch collector on my travels.

Patches were the 'in' thing at the time, as most dart players wore cardigans to go on stage, see Darts World front cover No 1. Edition of the London team (pictured, right). My team, The West of England, had green cardigans. Darts at the time was a winter sport, hence cardigans.



The person with most patches I knew was Ken Osborne of Lancashire (County) who attended the formation of the British Darts Organisation in January 1973...he must have had 200 on his cardigan.

I think your correspondent probably got his patch from Joe (Bag-of-donuts) Baltadonis who I believe played in the QCEDL league and was in the first World Masters. Joe would have had a couple as did Bob McCloud who arranged Joe's flight to London.

The design was not perfect but 1974 never had the techniques of today for patch designs. A patch was also done for the First Home Internationals, visits by the West of England to Russia, Malta, Canada, USA, Gibraltar, Sweden and Denmark. All these were done in limited editions of 100 and were eagerly sought after by collectors.

I know the first Home International patches have become collectors' items and are like gold dust. The last time I heard, one was sold at a huge premium.

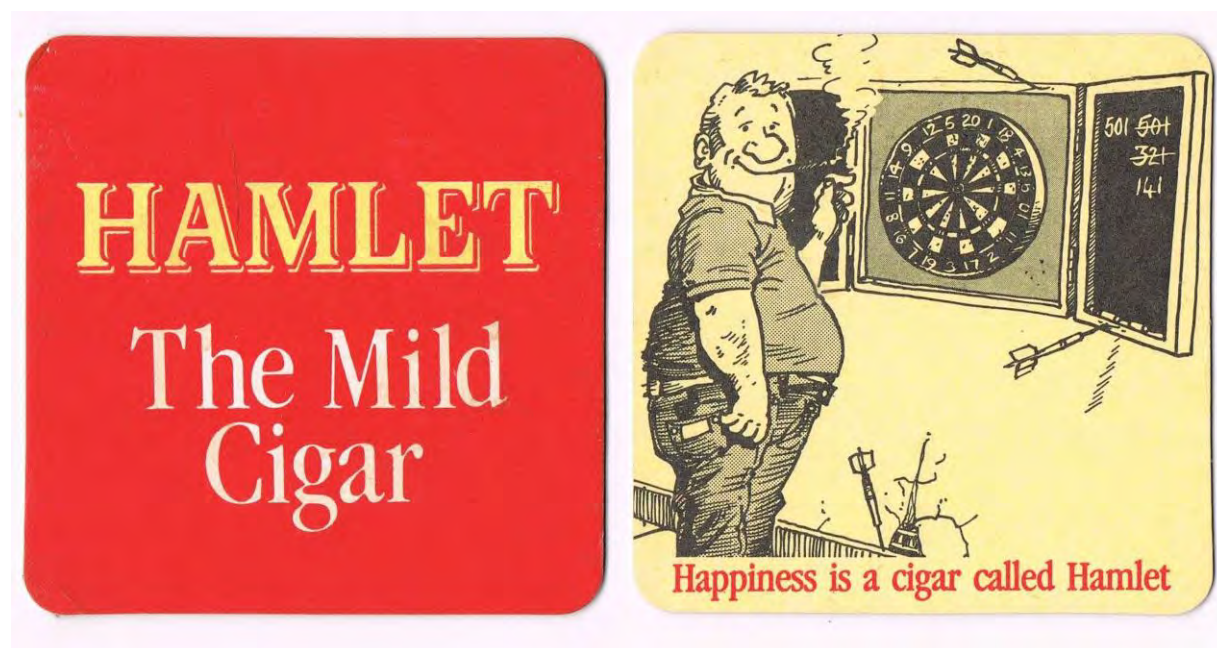
Thanks Eddie. Are any DDN subscribers darts patch collectors? If so, drop me an e-mail at info@patrickchaplin.com and tell me about your collection.

WELCOME TO NEW SUBSCRIBERS

Welcome to everyone who has subscribed since the last issue of DDN which include Rod Matthews from Rhode Island, USA, Doug Haney from Canada and Ralph Ferrira who, as far as I know, is my first subscriber from Brazil.

FEEDBACK – HAMLET CIGARS

Following on from the 'pizza' (or Hamlet cigar) dartboard discussions in DDN's #76 and 77, I found a Hamlet beer mat (see below) that emerged at about the same time.



This set me to wondering if there are any other (apart from me) collectors of darts-related beer mats. If you *are* such a collector (as with the patches discussed earlier in

this issue) please write to me at info@patrickchaplin.com with details and, hopefully, a photograph of two.

ELECTRONIC SCORERS

Subscriber Keith Callister wrote with reference to my article regarding electronic scorers featured in the July DDN.

I was interested in the request for information on electronic scorers as sent in by Don C. of the Lambeth Darts from Canada. I know the article was about whether electronic scorers were permissible by the Darts Organisations and you did reply to that, however I am more interested in the use of these machines and the impact if any on the game.

There are many scorers on the market which differ significantly in price from one supplier to another, the functionality of the machines also vary with the higher priced ones having the facility to be interrogated such that if a score is queried belatedly it is possible to scroll back to identify which scores had been input. This is obviously a great asset to have providing the person who is inputting the scores knows how to do this.



[The example shown left is from 1993 and was highly advanced for its time offering 'A full review of more than 1,000 results or individual score breakdowns.']

It is an unfortunate but fairly common situation to have the game thrown into chaos by somebody inputting an incorrect score, trying to correct it and making the situation worse. I'm sure many of your subscribers will be able to recall situations like this. Or, as happened to me recently in the

Saltdean Tavern [Sussex, England] a transient interruption to the electrical supply resulted in the game, which was half completed, being lost. I am unaware of electronic scorers (pub level at least) having battery back-up in the event of a power failure.

The aspect that interests me the most however is whether players are becoming reliant on the machines and thereby losing out on a vital part of the game, that is, the optimum "Out" shots. When using the "old-fashioned" chalk board the chalker needs to be able to add up the score achieved by the 3 darts thrown and to subtract it from the existing total on the chalkboard. In doing this he develops an understanding of the numbers to throw for in order to leave the required double to finish the game. This is most apparent when seeing the professional dart players on television and the shots they take out. There is no interruption to their throwing rhythm even when the target is missed, an alternative is usually available to them because they have it pre-sorted in their minds.

As an older player I don't want to appear ageist in any way but I have noticed, certainly over the past twenty or so years that many of the younger players seem

totally reliant on electronic scorers, I have seen quite a few, when having to use a chalk board, using the calculator facility on their mobile phone to add up and subtract scores. This must place them at a disadvantage even when their team mates are shouting instructions as to which numbers to throw for!

It would be interesting to hear your and other player's views on this topic.

ELM DARTBOARDS AND THE CHAMPION'S CHOICE

David Blyth, a visitor to my website www.patrickchaplin.com, contacted me recently to say

Excellent site. I shall work my way around it. Just two things...

(1) In the 70s, The Provision Stores, Norwich, [Norfolk, England] played on an elm board. It had to be soaked in water before being hung for a match. Colours were very indistinguishable and rivulets of water from darts made it difficult [to play].

(2) What ever happened to the Professional Board? Again I believe it came out in the 70s. Because the pros were getting so good, the double and treble beds were half the depth of the normal board. I saw it once and then it was gone. Cheers. Best of luck. May contact you again.

Of course those of us of a certain age will remember the elm board and remember the frustration of the discolouration of the colours of the segments due to the wooden dartboard having to be soaked in water overnight to keep the board subtle and to destroy the mites that often lived in the wood.

The elm (or poplar) board was the dartboard of choice throughout the first seven decades of the twentieth century. Although the bristle dartboard was patented by NODOR in the 1930s, the price was too high for the ordinary darts man and woman so the elm board continued into the 70s until two major events occurred.

Firstly, Dutch elm disease struck the UK in the early 1970s, decimating the trees and, secondly, when the British Darts Organisation (BDO) was formed in 1974, their rules stated that their tournaments should only be played on a bristle dartboard.

There are still a few elm boards around, the most well-known of which is the Manchester or Log-End' board which is much smaller than standard and has different numbering. However, I believe that there are still a few darts leagues in Yorkshire that play on the elm board.

As for the 'Professional Board' I thought that David was referring to the 'Champions Choice' dartboard made by either WINMAU or NODOR. I also seemed to remember Bob Anderson (Embassy World Champion in 1988 and three-times WINMAU World Master (1986, 1987, 1988) saying years ago that he used to practice on that kind of board because when a player then transferred to a standard tournament board the doubles and trebles looked huge. However, I needed to check so contacted Vince Bluck, Managing Director of International. He replied

Hi Pat, I hope this helps re the Champions Choice:

Whilst I'm not able to confirm the exact date this was launched, I can add some info:

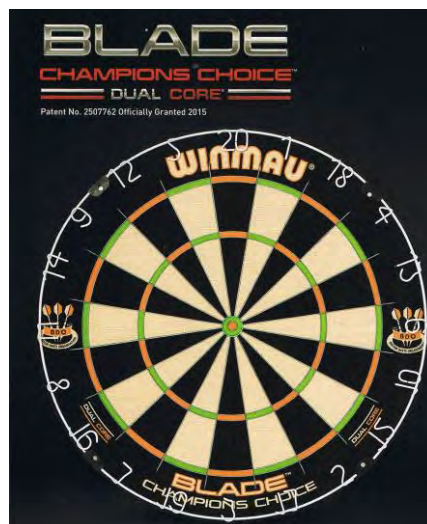
As you know, my family acquired NODOR in 1983 – 33 years ago. The NODOR Champions Choice was already extremely well established, so I suspect the concept of a practice board using half size doubles and trebles is at least 40 years old...

In 1983, the NODOR Champions Choice featured half size doubles and trebles and fluorescent colours, providing improved visibility to the smaller scoring zones. In the mid 1990's, the owner of New York based Darts Unlimited Limited, Bob McLeod, approached us with the "Minibull" concept.

NODOR's Supabull, patented and launched in 1984, was already hugely successful as it eliminated the three old-fashioned support staples. We jointly developed a smaller bullseye using the Supabull's staple free concept and launched the "Minibull" in 1995. The Minibull was introduced on both the NODOR Champions Choice and Bob McLeod's Raven branded Champions Choice.

In the late 1990's NODOR's ink suppliers had ceased the manufacture of the fluorescent inks used in the Champion's Choice doubles and trebles and the board's graphics reverted to traditional colours.

In parallel to NODOR, WINMAU were also producing their own version of the Champions Choice board throughout the 1980's and 1990's, though NODOR's Supabull patent prohibited them from using a staple free "Minibull." NODOR subsequently acquired WINMAU in 2001, thus allowing the WINMAU Champions Choice to be upgraded and feature the Minibull. The next decade witnessed a plethora of breakthroughs in dartboard wiring technology, as evidenced by the evolution of WINMAU's world famous Blade bristle dartboard.



In 2013, WINMAU's Champions Choice was revolutionised once more (See image above, right. © 2015 WINMAU. Used with permission.) - the specialised Champions Choice half size scoring zones were combined with a Blade 4 wiring system, a Dual Core platform and the reintroduction of hi-visibility graphics.

As global prize funds have grown to unprecedented levels, so professional players continue to seek cutting edge technology that might provide a winning advantage. WINMAU's Blade Champions Choice provides an unrivalled practice solution that literally is the "choice of champions" in this highly competitive and exhilarating sport.

So was I right about Bob Anderson?

Bob told me:

Hi Patrick. I certainly do use a Unicorn version of the old "champions choice", the main difference being that the bull and twenty-five are also approximately half size, whereas the original WINMAU had full size 50/25. That tended to persuade you to use the bull more than needed. This training aid is extremely good. Hope this helps, best wishes Bob.

Thanks to both Vince and Bob for their input. Much appreciated.

NEWS OF THE WORLD 180 GUILD BADGES – FEEDBACK

Following receipt of #77 regular contributor Mick Simpson, covered a lot of ground.



Mick wrote:

Morning Patrick. Just read your latest edition of DDN. A fantastic read as ever. I always admire people who do fantastic things to raise money for charity. For the Sports Argus team to keep going all these years is nothing short of amazing. Please pass on my congratulations to them. [Mick. Consider it done.]

I could be wrong but I can't imagine the News of the World only handing out those [180 Guild] badges for one year? I would never doubt your contact but, as I told you, I have about eight or so of these in my collection. It will be very interesting to see if any other subscribers think the same?

In fact Mick, Brian H. has already e-mailed me to say:

I was thinking about the News of The World 180 badges you wrote about and about an old film I remembered which mentioned the badge: "It Always Rains On Sunday" 1947: I managed to find it on YouTube to refresh my memory: About 17 mins in darts mad George (Edward Chapman) is sitting reading the News of the World and sees that one of his rivals has won "a badge"...and later in the pub (1hr 15 mins) he hits one, then two trebles & his opponent says: "A badge would look fine on that suit George"...and he hits the final treble to realise his dream... It's only fiction but suggests the badges were still on the go in 1947... I've always liked films like these for their slice of real life of the 40s, but this one in particular for the depiction of darts of the era & the references to the News of The World - Real nostalgia!

The film Brian mentions also included Jim Pike and Leo Newstead in the pub darts scene(s) and it may well be that lesser-known darts star at the time Jimmy Clow was also featured. A little later Brian contacted me again writing

Hello again Patrick! Further to my previous email: Mystery solved: I've just read a synopsis of the book "Always Rains On Sunday" and it is based on a day in 1939....So your assertion that News of the World 180 badges were only given out in 1938-39 is intact!

Thanks Brian. Actually I believe, like Mick Simpson above, that the 180 Guild badges *were* issued throughout the Second World War and for a period beyond. Otherwise how would so many of them be in darts memorabilia collections? (Mick has eight or more and, up until recently, I had three, which indicates to me that there are a lot of them about still.)

At the end of his e-mail to me, Brian H. added:

On another topic: I recently won an eBay auction for a set of Alwyn Mullins dart flights by Unicorn. I was intrigued that he was considered a big enough star of the game to have his own set of flights made by a big manufacturer but can't find a lot of information about him on the internet... Is he a News of the World winner that you have a profile for and could possibly feature in your DDN? Your background stories on past champions are always much appreciated.



I have searched for information about Alwyn Mullins (pictured above, right) who was *News of the World* champion in 1957. Mullins was the Yorkshire Divisional Champion that year and beat Wales's Len Baker 2-0 in the Grand Final. The full results of my research into Alwyn Mullins will be revealed in the November issue.

LEIGHTON REES – SEPTEMBER ISSUE - FEEDBACK

Jerry Feather, one of my many subscribers in the USA, wrote of issue #77

Patrick. Another great DDN. I was much luckier than you on Leighton Rees, one of my favorite players. Always a gentleman. Sometime I will have to relate of couple of Leighton stories in Colorado. One quick one. In 1979, Leighton came to the Colorado Open and won every event, blind draw with a novice and had to play Nicky Virachkul and Andy Green in finals. His final turn was double bull, triple 16, triple 15, with Nicky and Andy needing one bull to win in Cricket.

Jerry also asked "Have you done much research on the 170 certificate?" I will also be covering the '170 Club' in the next issue.

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