

DR. DARTS' NEWSLETTER

Issue 88

July 2017



SUMMER'S HERE AND IT'S TIME FOR DARTS AL FRESCO

I appreciate that in some countries reached by *DDN* the summer is months away but over here in the UK we are now celebrating its arrival (sometimes actually with sunshine) throughout the country especially in rural communities, by holding fairs and fêtes, featuring fun and games of all kinds, those events raising much-needed funds for local churches, village halls and community projects.

I'm certain that similar events are held across the world at the proper time but I thought I'd just mention the Greete village fête a report on which I found in the *Teme Valley Times*, a Shropshire free newspaper, when I visited that county in early June. It's a typical English scene and a typical English village with typical English weather. The *Times* report stated



There was an unwelcome damp start to the morning but fortunately by afternoon the clouds had lightened and the fête went ahead in dry but overcast conditions. Undeterred, people turned out to support the event...the pleasant surroundings encouraged many to sit...and enjoy teas and cakes...

The fête also included 'wellie wanging' (throwing a wellington boot the furthest), a scarecrow competition and **DARTS**. The report stated *Six darts per go and the highest score wins – with most of the competitors managing to hit the dartboard and having a bit of fun!* If the darts were not your scene then you could always 'hook-a-duck'...

Doubtless much fun was had by all and many pounds raised for, in this case, St. James' Church, Greete. The photo, above right, shows the darts competition in progress. Please note the umbrella hung above the dartboard just in case the 'damp' returned. (Image © *Teme Valley Times*.)

CHAMPION OF CHAMPIONS – CHANGE OF VENUE

I featured this competition in the June *DDN*. Simon Hall of Red Dragon Darts has now confirmed that the venue for this event is now St. David's Hall, Cardiff.

THE MISSING LINK? - READERS RESPOND

Thanks to all of you who provided me with feedback on the lead story in last month's *DDN* where I revealed the discovery of a most unusual dartboard.

The dartboard, pictured below, was discovered in a wall space in a pub (now closed) in Norfolk some years ago.



DDN stalwart Mick Simpson wrote

Another fantastic read. I don't know but that dartboard looks home-made? I assume from the large crack that it is made of wood? If this board was manufactured I believe it would be to a better standard? Still very interesting though.

The old dartboards of yesteryear (pre-bristle) were nearly always constructed from wood, usually elm but sometimes poplar, and this board is clearly made of that material.

Subscriber Ian gave me his thoughts:

I'm of the impression that the board is not old enough to throw any of your previous theories out of the window. The exact same numbers in the same order? For me it's been made after a modern board, not that I'm implying that it's a fake, I'm sure that it's all above board (if you'll excuse the pun!) but not the original idea for the modern numbering system. Interesting though, wish I'd found it!

From the USA Jerry Feather wrote

Patrick: Another great article! Looking at the old board it does have similarities to the Belgium Pic board in size.

Brian H. was enthralled by the discovery and told me

Thanks once again for your excellent DDN! The dartboard find was amazing...but confusing. While there are the 20 numbers in the correct sequence round the outside there appears to be no real target area (or segment) for the number other than the triangle it is in. It would seem strange to aim for a very small target for little gain. I hope your revelation attracts a response from your readers that may explain a bit more about the board. I'm sure you will now have the bit between your teeth to solve the mystery!

While Bill Bell responded with

Great DDN. I reckon it's a hybrid board!!

I think Bill's right. I talked about the Norfolk Board in the last issue (a sort of miniature archery target) and if you combine the main features of that board with the numbering of the more modern dartboard then you can see how, potentially, it might have been a one-off creation by a landlord with imagination; something constructed simply for the entertainment of the darts players in his own public house.



However, that does not explain the *reverse* of the board (see photo). This is a whole new ball game, or rather dart game.

To me, at first glance, it is reminiscent of a dartboard based on the game of snooker. However, the colours are only white and red which *might* suggest that this is a darts version of the earlier game of billiards which involves only two white and one red ball.

But then what do the green triangles represent and what on earth do the random numbers on the outer edge mean?

Clearly the target retains the same miniature archery target radiating from the centre so

how does that fit into the scoring of this game?

I really have no option but to ask you, my subscribers, for any other suggestions. Please contact me at patrick.chaplin@btinternet.com.

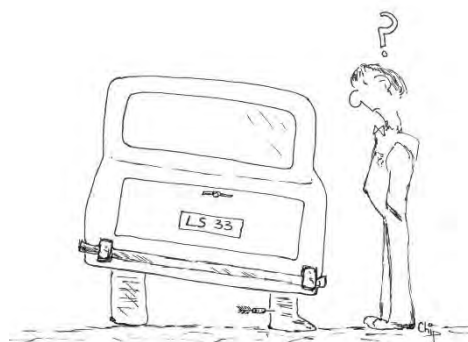
CLAY PIPE - FEEDBACK

Brian H. (mentioned above) also wrote

Thank you for trying to answer my query about a Clay-Pipe! I'm a little disappointed no one else can corroborate the expression but it may have been a very local thing that grew up in the pit village.

I replied

As regards 'clay pipe', I'm sorry that I couldn't discover anything more but I remain convinced that it is a 'local' expression. As far back as 1936 Rupert Croft-Cooke, author of the first book entirely devoted to darts, recognised that 'every district has its own words' and cited several examples including 'Lord Sherborne' which was 'an expression used only in the Cotswolds' denoting the number 33. This apparently owed its origins to the fact that, for many years, the said Lord drove a car with the registration number 33.



When I played darts back in the 80s in a local pub the number 43 (if it scored, single 20, single 20, treble 1) was always followed by a cry of "Wantz Road!" that simply being the home address of one of our players. It started as just him saying it and then became more or less engrained in team banter. That's how easily these things start. (The Lord Sherborne cartoon, above right, first appeared in *Scoring for Show, Doubles for Dough* (Authors: Bobby George and me (2011). Image © Chip. Used with permission.)

FLIGHT CLUB AND 'ELECTRODART'

Jason Dale, the Technical Director at Flight Club (which was mentioned in #87), has contacted me as follows:

Hi Patrick! I got your newsletter...and love it - please send me newsletters in future! The Electrodart machine is a wonder. I thought the stuff we develop was complex but the Electro Dart insides are a work of art.

I purchased *Electrodart*, a penny slot machine many years ago at a fairground auction in Cambridgeshire and although I did use it occasionally to raise funds for charity it had lain under a cover in the corner of my office for about twenty years.



As you can see from the photograph, above right, the glass face featured a dartboard, behind which were lights and a switch mechanism. Once the punter inserted an old penny, he or she pushed the button (bottom right of the machine) and held it in while lights flashed from one number to the next. The 'skill' was to release the button at the right time trying to stop on one of only a handful of numbers that actually won you any money.



The top prize, for stopping it on the number 20, was one shilling (twelve old pennies) or the equivalent today of five 'new' pence. For a one penny stake one shilling was a marvelous win added to which a bell rang to announce your success as the twelve old pennies clunked one at a time into the small metal receptacle below.

When Steve Moore, founder of Flight Club ('Social Darts') visited me a few months ago in search of items to display as part of the design of the second Flight Club he was really taken by 'Electrodart' and Steve immediately saw it as 'the star of the show.' The photo, above left, shows just part of the complex workings of this 'work of art'.

THE HISTORY OF OUTSHOT CHARTS

Another Jason, Jason Carter, e-mailed me with an interesting query:

Hi Patrick, Hope this email finds you well. I'm glad I am now a subscriber to your monthly newsletter. Lots of good stuff in there!

Was just curious if you know anything about the first possible outchart. I'm curious how the older guys learned to play the game so well before outcharts were readily available on the internet. Surely someone at one point had to sit down and do the math and word spread about this "new efficient method". Is there any known history on this, or is it just one of those things lost in darts folklore?

As far as I'm around I hope that *nothing* is 'lost in darts folklore'. I'll always do my best to resolve any issue that subscribers raise. Mind you, this one had me thinking because, quite frankly, I'd never given the history of outshot chart a first thought let alone a second one.

Treble 13	+	Double 13	=	65
„ 14	+	„ 14	=	70
„ 15	+	„ 15	=	75
„ 16	+	„ 16	=	80
„ 17	+	„ 17	=	85
„ 18	+	„ 18	=	90
„ 19	+	„ 19	=	95

After some delving I discovered that there was an outshot chart, of sorts, in advice given about finishing in Rupert Croft-Cooke's book *Darts* published in 1936. However, on further examination, it appeared that the author was merely setting out higher numbers which any darts player should have 'firmly fixed in his mind.' But then Croft-Cooke did emphasise the importance of learning the treble and double of the higher numbers from 13 and I suppose, at a push, the extract shown right could be construed as a formative outshot chart. So I made some enquiries of the major darts manufacturing companies.

Stanley Lowy, of Unicorn informed me that although he did not know *exactly* when the company published the first Unicorn out chart he could trace it back to 1970 when Barry Twomlow revised and expanded it. Stanley added:

We certainly produced posters and pocket versions from then but I cannot be sure about earlier than that. I see that we called it Best Ways to Finish and in our 2018 catalogue, just published, we show a new poster on page 70 with the title Ways to Finish which show more ways than previous editions.

Robert Pringle, Sales and Marketing Director for Harrows Darts technology told me that, although his company is fairly recent compared to others, Harrows first developed 'calculator cards' in 1973. Robert told me, "We had a Series 1 which covered 101 to 41 which was followed shortly afterwards by Series 2 which covered 170 to 102."

This outshot chart was marketed as the 'Hitchcock Throw Calculator' branded after the top professional darts player at the time, the legendary Joe Hitchcock. The advert shown here is from the May 1973 issue of *Darts World* (page 4); the product retailing at

a mere 25p each (or five for one pound). These were sold separately as accessories and were superseded in 1985 by an Eric Bristow version which included a few different check out shots which is still sold by Harrows today.

FANCY YOURSELF AS A... DARTS PLAYER? - BUT ARE FED UP WITH TAKING CHALKS!

Throw the Professional Way -

Don't delay - Send today!

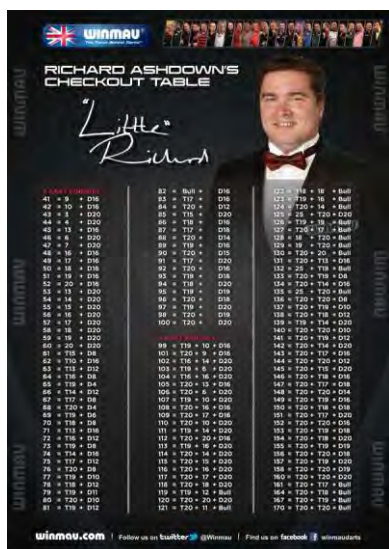
"IT'S NOT ALL TECHNIQUE AND PRACTICE - BE AMAZED AT IMPROVEMENT IN YOUR PLAY WHEN YOU KNOW YOUR SHOT" SAYS **Joe Hitchcock** (British Professional Champion)

25p each Post Paid or 5 for £1 (Retail and Club Enquiries Welcome)

- The HARROW'S GAME SHOT Way - with the HITCHCOCK THROW CALCULATOR 101-41 FINISH ON POCKET SIZE FLEXI CARD

Cheques or Postal Orders to:
HARROWS (DEPT S.1.)
27 The Crest, Sawbridgeworth, Herts

When I enquired of my sponsor WINMAU there was some doubt as to when exactly the outshot chart was introduced but Sales and Marketing Director, Ian Flack told me



...all mainline WINMAU dartboards and standard darts (not the premium-style packaging) all include Little Richard Ashdown's checkout table at the minute (the darts version is printed on the insert card). (See image, right. © WINMAU)

It seems clear to me that several decades ago there was simply no need of, or demand for, an outshot chart. If you think about darts in the early days, the 1920s and 1930s, players often could not afford to even buy their own darts, having to rely on the generosity of the landlord or landlady of their local pub who provided 'house darts' free-of-charge. (Back then those would have been, in the main, 'French darts', wooden darts with turkey feather flights.)

Darts players of sixty or seventy years ago simply learned the outshots or had their favourite finish which they *always* tried to finish on. Life was never really very complicated from a darts perspective back then. It was only when darts experienced a renaissance beginning in the late 1960s/early 1970s that such educational aids such as an outshot chart was deemed necessary.

NEWS OF THE WORLD SNIPPET

This month's *NoW* snippet, originated from an enquiry via www.patrickchaplin.com (my Darts History website) from a lady named Carol Butler who was looking for information about her father's successes in the *News of the World* tournament back in the 1950s. Carol wrote:

Hi there, my name is Carol and my dad's name Albert Carpenter. Sadly he is no longer with us but he was the News of The World London area winner in 1955. Would you know of any photos or articles related to this? He was also London and Home Counties runner up in 1955. I have both his medals but can find nothing about him hopefully you may be able to help.

I checked my archive and found reference to 'A. Carpenter' in the programme for the *News of the World* London and Home Counties Divisional Final which was held at the Shoreditch Town Hall on Monday 21st March 1955. Albert did indeed win the London Area final that year. He represented the *Cranbrook Arms*, Deptford, S.E.8 and beat D. Mengham of the *Kings Arms*, Moreland Street, E.C.1 in that final.

One additional piece of information I found was that earlier, in 1952, an 'A. Carpenter' won the Kent Area final of the *News of the World* and thus made it to the Divisional finals that year. I was unsure whether or not this 'A. Carpenter' was Carol's father. This player represented the 'Social Club, Sidcup'. Carol confirmed that her father did play for a Sidcup team too.

It was at this stage I wrote to my key contact at the News UK Archive and he was able to provide me with information relating to both the 1952 and 1955 matches.

The report of the London and Home Counties divisional final held Shoreditch Town Hall on Tuesday 18th March 1952 confirmed that Tom Stracey, representing the *Albion Inn*, Epsom)

and a 'veteran' in terms of participating in the *News of the World* tournament, had lifted the title after beating Arthur (*sic*) Carpenter (representing the Social Club, Sidcup) in a 'fitting climax of non-stop thrills.' 'The Champ' reported:

What a final it was. Winning in two straight legs, which produced no less than 11 three-figure scores, Stracey completed the second leg in only 17 darts. Carpenter began the first leg with 140 and 100 and Stracey replied with 100 and 89. Then, by the time Stracey had obtained game shot, Carpenter had thrown another "ton," while Stracey's scores had included a further 100 and a 121.

The scores in the second leg speak for themselves: Stracey – 100, 85, 100, 60, 100, 56 (16, double top. Carpenter – 100, 40, 85, 60, 100. Stracey [pictured] certainly gave his 300 supporters something to cheer, having won an earlier leg in 17 darts and throwing the biggest score of the evening – 171. (Sadly no photograph of Carpenter survives.)



Carpenter, too, took a leg in 17 darts in accomplishing a fine performance by beating local favourite Billy Hughes (Royal Standard, Hackney) in the semi-finals. Many thought Hughes a "good thing" after his form in the quarter-finals...But Carpenter had other ideas. With the score at 1-1 Carpenter began the deciding leg by throwing 83, 140, 135, and was out in eight more darts.

A point to note is that it was not unusual for the compiler(s) of the *News of the World* programme to make occasional errors in relation to the names of players and in 1955 Albert, called 'Arthur' in 1952, became 'Alf' but it was still the same player.

At the 1955 *News of the World* London and Home Counties Divisional final, Albert Carpenter lined up with seven other Area champions all in a bid to be the one player to make it through to the Grand Finals to be held at the Empress Hall, Earl's Court, London, on 23rd April 1955.

A full report of that 1955 Grand Final will be featured in the next issue of *DDN*.

THE PROBLEMS OF RESEARCHING DARTS – PART 2 – FEEDBACK

Many thanks to all subscribers who sent me messages of support after having read my 'rant' in the last issue of *DDN* about folks not responding to work that I have carried out for them, for nothing. But it seems that I could have been mistaken and *perhaps* my moan wasn't justified.

Without going into details I am thankful to my good friend David King (he of www.darts501.com fame) for bringing various technical points to my attention. David has offered some solutions which I am looking to pursue.

A GOODWILL MESSAGE FROM 'THE SAGE OF WORLD DARTS'

Many *DDN* readers will be aware of the work undertaken by Dr. Eddie Norman (pictured below in 2014) over the past six or more decades promoting darts worldwide. He is also a great fan of *DDN* and his deep knowledge of our sport has helped me over the years on numerous occasions. Here's what he wrote to me after having read #87:

Well I must say I have just opened your latest June DDN and ☺☺☺☺ can honestly say in my opinion that this is the very best DDN I have read, and I have read them all. All of your DDN's are great, but this latest one surpasses everything, it just has everything one comes to expect from your great writing...



The missing link article, well Patrick that is phenomenal and could (?) as you say result in a little of darts history being rewritten and as always the only person that can and will get to the bottom of the missing link dartboard is your good self. I like I think many of your readers will wait for your latest instalment on the Queen's Head dartboard with bated breath. I can imagine your eyes when you opened your e- mail and saw this huge dartboard and thought what the heck!!! I myself have seen nothing like it and I thought I had seen most things in darts...

The Worthington Darts Champion article was most interesting. No one is going to let people forget the News of The World championship. I love every article that you write on the NoW as I am sure many others do. Cannot get enough of its history.

Thickness of a dart mat? Interesting question, but like you say in top darts rubber mats are seldom used.

The Flight Club. What a photograph. Next time I am in London I will be sure to visit. The photo is fascinating. It looks like a fairground... Article on Peter Manley – Brilliant. One of my favourite players. I used to love watching him on TV. So good to hear he is still busy and work is coming his way.

Clay Pipe - Never heard the expression but will watch to see if anyone enlightens you. Nice to read an answer from Doug McCarthy and to hear from him on your page.

No answers to say 'Thank you' after all your work...please do not let the ones get you down who do not say thank you. I am and always will be very grateful to the help and assistance you have given me over the years.

Kindest regards and thank you again for the great #87. It truly and really is a great issue.

DO PEOPLE ACTUALLY PLAY DARTS BETTER DRUNK?

Many thanks to Ron Speidel from Mission, Texas, USA for bringing to my attention a fascinating article he discovered on line. Ron writes:

Dr. Chaplin, I thought you might like. Hey, I saw this on VinePair and thought of you: Do People Actually Play Darts Better Drunk? Johns Hopkins Decided to Find Out:

<https://vinepair.com/articles/johns-hopkins-prohibition-whiskey-experiment/>

I replied thanking Ron for letting me know about the article and added:

Although top players tend to keep off the booze these days, mainly because of the amount of money there is to be won especially in PDC-related tournaments, drinking by darts players of the past is legendary. Back in the day top English player Leo Newstead (pictured left, in 1949) was said to play his best darts after FIFTEEN pints of Guinness! (Image: PC/Wolfe Archive.)



I also recall a number of players failing to keep up with Cliff Lazarenko in the drinking stakes. Late-night curries and all-night poker games were also a feature of darts in the 70s and 80s.

Today top professionals *must always* be on top of their game. Who would have thought three or four decades ago that darts players in the 21st century would have training regimes and, in some cases, personal trainers?

The fact that darts players were being 'tested' back in the 1920s intrigued me so I wrote again to Ron:

A couple of other points...I didn't think darts had reached the US proper in the 1920s so where did he find sufficient players to test? I always understood that darts was a kid's game up until the end of WW2. [American servicemen and women had been introduced to darts in English pubs during the war and are known to have taken the game back home with them when hostilities ceased. This was also true of servicemen and women of Commonwealth countries who had been stationed in the UK.] Also, I've known a lot of people over the years who say they play better when drunk when in reality they only THINK they do.

Ron replied:

That is an interesting question that would require some research. I can tell you that my grandfather came back from WWI and he had an old wooden board that I remember as a child hanging out in his tool shed on the farm. He said he brought it home from the war. I don't really remember the darts.

My father and his two brothers played and my dad and uncles played in WWII. My father did have a picture showing him and some other soldiers in the jungles throwing darts at an old homemade wooden dartboard on a tree. If I can find it I'll send you a copy.

Ron that would be great.

NEW SUBSCRIBERS

A warm welcome to all new subscribers to *DDN* which this time includes many new UK subscribers plus Mike Thompson, an ex-pat from Wales, who has been living in Marbella, Spain for 20 years. Joining our happy throng too are Nikki and Derick Ergun from Aruba, a tiny Caribbean island off the coast of Venezuela.

I asked Nikki how popular darts is on the island and she replied:

You asked if Darts is played here in Aruba. Sadly not greatly. We are a Dutch territory here and I contacted The Netherlands Sports Minister to see if it was possible that a Dutch player could come here to help spread the game. He contacted the U.K. sports body and they wrote and said you would learn nothing from a darts player. The person you want is Dr Eddie Norman. He will teach you more than any player. As a result Eddie Norman arrived here and has now visited us twice and we are learning.

Aruba gets thousands of Americans visit us here annually and many want to play a game of darts. Eddie left us darts and dartboards... Hopefully darts may at last take off here.

I sincerely hope so Nikki. That Eddie Norman gets *everywhere* doesn't he!

KLOKIT – A DARTS SCORER

Vince Bluck, the top man at NODOR International, contacted me recently concerning an item that dates back to the days when NODOR was based in the east end of London.



‘KLOKIT’ (pictured) was a scorer manufactured by an associated company of NODOR’s. On the back of the item is the legend ‘KLOKIT. THE KLOKIT CO. LTD. 22-24 Hatfield Road, STRATFORD, LONDON, E.15. GAME SCORER. BRITISH MADE.’

However, was this a *darts* scorer?

It doesn't look as if it was designed to be anything else yet it is not possible to score games of 1,001, which were very popular for both team and individual many years ago, as the display only allows for three digits. Also, to record a match of any kind you would have had to purchase *two* of these scorers. Sadly any instructions are lacking as is any patent number so, over to you my readers.

If you can help please contact me at patrick.chaplin@btinternet.com.

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