

DR. DARTS' NEWSLETTER

Issue 97

April 2018



GIVING SOMETHING BACK TO THE SPORT OF DARTS

You often hear sportsmen say that they would like to “give something back to the sport” after their main careers are over, but in the case of one Plymouth darts player, he has gone above and beyond, despite major setbacks in his personal life.



Snowy Dyson was a member of the Devonshire and Dorset Regiment when, following an horrendous accident, in which two people were killed, he was medically discharged from a career he loved dearly.

In October 2015, the 48-year-old had to have his left leg amputated due to progressive Type 2 Diabetes and he adapted well with the use of a prosthetic leg, to carry on playing the sport he loves.

But in 2016, just weeks before he was due to take his place in the WINMAU World Masters, one of the game's most prestigious tournaments, he received the devastating news that he had to have his remaining leg amputated. That procedure was carried out at Derriford Hospital in Plymouth on the morning of Monday, July 11.

(The photo, above, shows Snowy Dyson, Scott Mitchell (far right), who has kindly accepted to be the league's Patron which also has the backing of multi-world titled Trina Gulliver (second left) and Tracy Ann Fletcher from Prostate Cancer UK.)

Snowy is now the only bi-lateral, above the knee amputee, in the World Disability Darts Association (WDDA) and his progress has been remarkable due to the staff's dedication at the Thornbury Centre at Derriford, enabling him to still compete on the oche. Now Snowy has taken his love for the sport further and is to introduce for the first time in Plymouth, a darts league for disabled players.

The Plymouth Disabled Darts League will be a pioneering venture for anybody with a disability who not only wants to play darts but also socialise twice a month at three venues around the city.

These will be at the City Social Club, Tamar View and The Brookside and the league will be sponsored by Shaun Hobbs, licensee of the City Social. The league's patron will be England darts captain and former BDO World Champion Scott Mitchell.

There will be two playing boards at each of the three venues on match nights. One will be set at a wheelchair height of 1m 37cms and then there will be a normal standing height board. This will then enable a standing player to oppose a wheelchair marksman. The league will be played under BDDA (British Disabled Darts Association) rules with no raised oches and all players must retrieve their own darts.

A registration meeting will be set up for Thursday, July 26 at a venue yet to be decided and the first matches will take place on Thursday, August 30.

The format will be two trebles, three doubles and six singles, the individual games to be played over the best of five legs of 501.

Steve Chapman

WELCOME TO ALL NEW SUBSCRIBERS

A warm welcome to all new subscribers to *DDN* which this month include Roberto Fernandez from Panama. Roberto learned of *DDN* from global darts ambassador Dr. Eddie Norman. Roberto told me, "Darts is growing here in Panama. Thanks to Doctor Eddie."

Also subscribing after attending one of Eddie's darts lectures is *Juan-Ignacio Restrepo of Columbia*. *Juan told me:*

I run a small fishing tackle business in the beautiful city of Cartagena here in Columbia. It is a port city with 970,000 people and is on Columbia's Caribbean Coast. Recently we had a return visit from Eddie Norman who is trying to establish darts here as a sport and also trying to establish a South America Darts Organisation.

Unfortunately I missed his previous visit but was eagerly awaiting this return visit.

I am hoping my own business will become an established darts business with Eddie's help.



I was sent along by my fellow darters to collect Eddie as he flew in at Rafael Nunez International Airport. I had not met him before, and wondered how I would recognise him. No need to worry, I saw a handsome, smiling English man, walking out of immigration with a dartboard under his arm.

I knew Eddie Norman had arrived.

Eddie stayed here three days teaching interested locals the sport of English darts. He was your perfect British Ambassador for Great Britain. He gave me your e-mail address and said if I asked you (nicely) you would send me your monthly darts magazine, which he said is the best on the darts market.

Juan is my first subscriber from Columbia and has already circulated *DDN* to his darting friends.

Welcome one and all!

‘JABBA’ LOOKS BACK AT THE 2017 GULF CUP

In *DDN* #96 I mentioned the 2017 Gulf Cup and included the fact that darts professional ‘Jamie ‘Jabba’ Caven and Ian ‘Diamond’ White had also been there for a darts exhibition; an additional attraction to the tournament. I wrote to Jamie asking if he recalled the event. He replied:

Sure I remember the event very well...and I worked with Ross again recently in Qatar where I stayed for five days for an exhibition before the Qatar Open at the end of January.



The exhibition was a great night with Ian [White] hitting many 180s and I was doing my usual stuff on my knees and stood on chair etc. The event was held in a large Irish pub called McGettigan's which was actually a music venue with a sports bar on the top floor.

It wasn't too hot inside as the air con certainly did its job. I am unaware of who won the cup on the following day as it ran on very late and me and Ian had to fly back home the following day. It was very well supported though and we

thoroughly enjoyed ourselves.

(The image above, shows, left to right, Jamie ‘Jabba’ Caven, Mark Washburn (co-shareholder and General Manager of DPME), Kieren Fallon, the former Irish champion flat-racing jockey, Ian ‘Diamond’ White and Ross Hampton, General Manager of DPME.)

Now on to this year's event...

GULF CUP 2018

Following my mention of Darts Players Middle East (DPME) in last month's issue, I am pleased to report that this year's tournament was, again, a great success. Ross Hampton, General Manager of the DPME writes

Six teams, each consisting of ten players from the regions of Bahrain, Dubai and Saudi Arabia competed across a total of 70 singles and 35 pairs matches for the AED 3,000 prize money and coveted title of Gulf Cup Of Darts Champions. Teams were drawn into groups of three where they played a round robin group phase with the leading team from each group playing off in the final.

The scoring system of the event is a cumulative points system whereby each game win is awarded one point, with ten singles games and five pairs games being played in each match, meaning there a possible 15 points available to each team, and every game played counts.

In Group A, EDSA 1 (Expat Darters of Saudi Arabia) narrowly went through by one point with 21 points total over Bahrain All Stars with 20 points, despite having been beaten by Bahrain 7-8 in their first match. Bahrain comfortably won their second match 12-3, but with 7 points from their first defeat, EDSA 1 managed a 14-1 win in their final game to progress through to the final.

Ironically this meant they would meet their second team, EDSA 2 who won through Group B comfortably with a 9-6 victory over Dubai and a 14-1 victory over Dilmun Club.

The final, which is a race to 8 points was a very closely contested affair. With 4 boards playing at a time, the teams were never fully aware of the score, but were never separated by more than 1 point at any stage. With EDSA 2 leading the first half of the games scraping out a 4-3 advantage before EDSA 1 coming strong in the second half to lead 7-6. With the final two games of pairs being played the tension was high.

For the second year in succession, the final went down to the very last game of doubles with EDSA 1 (pictured) securing the last point available with a 3-1 pairs victory to win the match 8-7 and secure their first gulf Cup Of Darts win on their debut.



Unfortunately current travel/trade embargoes within the region have restricted people's ability to participate this year, though DPME are in contact with Oman, Kuwait, Egypt and Iran who the organisation hopes will join in forthcoming events. Ross told me

Our target within the next five years is to gain participation from ten separate regions, each fielding a team and to gain recognition at local government level to help actively promote the sport and indeed make the world aware that darts is being played here, and at a reasonable standard too.

For 2019 the venue will again move to a new hosting region somewhere around the Arabian Gulf with hopefully more participating teams and regions. For any nations around the Middle East wanting to take part in the annual event, please contact Ross Hampton at dartplayersmiddleeast@gmail.com.

Great news! The WINMAU Dartboard Company has agreed to sponsor the DPME. If the DPME achieve all they are planning to do over the next five years the WINMAU sponsorship will surely prove an excellent investment.

DARTS LANGUAGE – CHAMPAGNE BREAKFAST

In last month's *DDN* I mentioned the phrase 'Champagne Breakfast' (scoring treble 1, treble 20, treble 5 in three darts) and asked if someone had just made it up or whether it was legitimate and, if so, what are its origins. David King has replied as follows:

The origins of the Bed and Breakfast (B&B) (26) as you have researched was a standard price for overnight accommodation 2/6, I dare say in the North of England sometime back. You may recall when you and Bobby [George] listed all the darts lingo you knew I put forward (after publication) the phrase 'Champagne Breakfast'...

The 'Champagne Breakfast' was a phrase used in some of the London pubs I played in; a basic upgrade from the 26 (single 1, single 5 single 20). I dare say the question setter [for that TV programme] may have got the question from the Darts501.com website where I have a list of dart terms...

I am sure there are many more regional 'localisms'.

Perhaps readers know of 'darts lingo' that is only used in a specific area. If so, please drop me a note at patrick.chaplin@btinternet.com.

MORE LINGO

Subscriber Mat Coward writes

On the subject of darts lingo – I remember asking you years ago about an expression, which at the time you hadn't come across. But with your much larger and broader readership these days, I wonder whether anyone else recalls it?

In North London, in the late 1970s/early 80s, if anyone left a required score of 123, the cry would go up "One-two-three never won a game!" It was considered to be a superstitious bogey number, a bit like 111 in cricket, and some players would really go out of their way to avoid leaving it.

Wonder if that rings any bells with readers – and whether anyone knows why 123 might have become so unpopular?

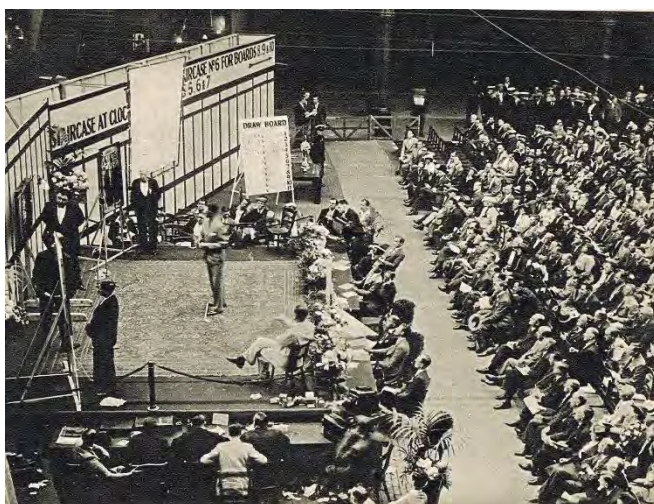
The nearest I have to 'One-two-three never won a game' is 'Ninety-Nine. Never won a game' which goes back to the days when 99 was regarded as a bogey number as it was the only number under 100 that could not be achieved in two darts.

So why was 123 such a number in North London pubs three or four decades ago? As always, if you can help solve the mystery please contact me.

THE LARGEST AUDIENCE EVER TO WATCH A DARTS MATCH

Just before the Berlin leg of the Premier League was to be played back in February I was asked by Dave Allen, Head of Media at the PDC, what the world record attendance is for a darts final. Tickets sales for the Mercedes Arena were estimated (and then proved to be) 12,000.

According to my research, the biggest audience *ever* was witness to the *News of the World* London & The South of England Divisional final held at the Royal Agricultural Hall, London on Thursday 11th May 1939. (Back then, pre-war, the *News of the World* was a *Divisional* tournament only. It did not go 'national' (by which they meant England and Wales) until 1947/48, the season it re-started after the war.)



The legendary Jim Pike in an article, cunningly titled 'Darts', in the 1946 publication *The Sports Book* told his readers that the audience for that Divisional final was 'nearly 17,000 people'.

However, looking at the *News of the World* newspaper for the Sunday previous to the final (7th May) the banner headline read '10,000 Will See Our Last Darts Final of 1938-39'. The actual report on that final which featured in the 14th May issue was headed

'14,000 thrilled by our darts final'. Five decades later, in the *News of the World Darts Annual 1988/89*, compiler John Morris confirmed that

14,354 fans - a record indoor attendance - crammed into London's Agricultural Hall to watch Middlesex hod-carrier Marmaduke 'Dukey' Brecon calmly end the legendary Jim Pike's News of the World challenge...

Brecon beat Pike 2-1.

Nothing post-war has come anywhere near that 1939 attendance. Not yet anyway. The Berlin attendance was a record for a PDC tournament and certainly a record for any European (non-UK) darts event. Surely the day will come, sooner rather than later, when the record held for so long by that *News of the World* tournament will be broken: and broken no doubt by the PDC.

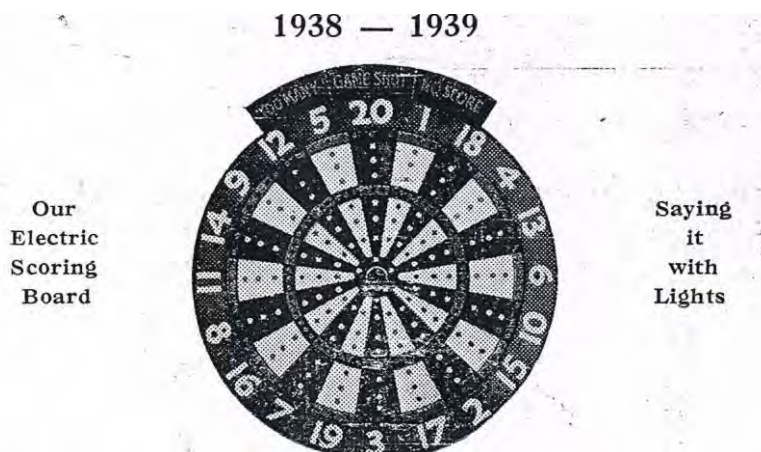
The photo, above, from my archive, shows the crowd at that 1939 London and the South of England Divisional final. **"How can the audience see anything?"** I hear you ask. Well, believe it or not, even back in the late 1930s, the *News of the World* had harnessed new technology.

Seeing the actual players from the back of the venue must have been difficult but knowing what the scores were, in addition to the Master of Ceremonies shouting them out, was facilitated by the employment, for the first time in 1939, of a huge electric scoreboard.

The other image, see below, is an extract from the cover of the programme for that famous tournament showing, 'Our Electric Scoring Board', 'Saying it with lights'! (The legend at the top of the board reads 'TOO MANY' 'GAME SHOT' and 'NO SCORE'.)

An operator sat in front of an electronic console, from where he was able to see

every throw of a dart and then make finger contact with the appropriate representative segment of the console which instantaneously illuminated that segment on the giant dartboard overhead.



For those who were unable to attend the Final at the Royal Agricultural Hall, and who lived in the London Area, the BBC broadcast a commentary on the final games by the Chief Organiser, Charles W. Garner on the wireless as part of their "London Calling!" feature at 9.40 p.m. that evening. (Garner was one of the founder members of the National Darts Association (NDA) set up in London in 1924. The NDA was then asked in 1926 to organise the inaugural *News of the World* tournament which only covered the Metropolitan Area of London; the final being held in 1928.)

STOP PRESS: I have just been informed by my Guatemalan research assistant 'Flip' Aloro that, before the introduction of the giant electronic scoreboard to *News of the World* finals in 1939, the scores were signalled to those at the back of the venue by two officials standing at either side of the stage using semaphore.

SHOULD THE PDC PREMIER LEAGUE ADOPT REGIONAL BOARDS?

Richard Phillipson, Secretary of the Embsay and Eastby Garage Darts League, who are fanatical about darts, wrote to me to say that the League will be using six regional boards across their 18-week summer season this year and added the thought:

If only the PDC Premier League would give such exposure to these boards as they navigate the country each week! How gripping viewing would it make to see the world's best players tackling the Manchester log-end board, London Narrow 5s, Yorkshire Doubles board etc. It could even revive the manufacture of the Tonbridge and Burton/Staffordshire boards - or am I just optimistically fantasising?

What a great idea! I contacted the PDC's CEO Matt Porter who replied

Thanks for sharing the suggestion with us. I think the problem would be that due to the niche appeal and reach of these boards, the vast majority of viewers and the crowd would not be familiar with the boards as they're not widely used or available and it would be confusing.

Thanks Matt. I understand the PDC's position and, of course, it is all down to what the punter expects of the Premier League. However, Richard's idea could, perhaps, be used as a one-off



celebrity fund-raising show on TV, such as *Sports Relief* or *Red Nose Day* here in the UK. MVG v Rob Cross playing on a Manchester Board. What entertainment that would be! (TV Executives, you know my number.)

Before leaving 'regional' boards, Richard Phillipson has asked for *DDN* readers' help. He asks

I'm wondering if you could possibly help me locate a UK/European supplier of a Belgian Vogelpik Dartboard set. I can only find U.S. suppliers on-line and their shipping fees are extortionate! Any assistance would be much appreciated.

The vogelpik dartboard (picture above left), in essence a miniature archery target, measures 7 inches (18cms) diameter (approx.). The example shown here is from my own collection and is clearly 'well-loved.'

If anyone can help, please contact me in the first instance at patrick.chaplin@btinternet.com and I will pass your information on to Richard. Many thanks.

HAVE YOU SPOTTED IT?

As *DDN* readers will know, it is usual for me, in the April edition each year to include a little April Foolishness in celebration of the UK's April Fools Day (1st April). Due to restrictions on space in this issue (so much has had to be carried forward into the May issue) this year's April Fool within is hardly noticeable...

NEXT MONTH

International Darts and 'The Pit'!

MY DARTS RESEARCH IS SPONSORED BY

WINMAU®
THE FORCE BEHIND DARTS™

Winmau.com

NOTE: Text © 2018 Patrick Chaplin or as shown. Images © Patrick Chaplin or as stated or sourced. Neither text nor images can be reproduced without prior permission of the copyright holder(s).