

Darts EXTRA WORLD

DWE ISSUE 11

INSIDE...

UKDA 2023/24 FIXTURES

INTERVIEW: HENDO SPEAKS

50 YEARS OF THE HOME INTERNATIONALS

ON TOUR: WDF, ADC, MSS & WOMENS SERIES

LAWRENCE LUSTIG, PATRICK CHAPLIN AND COLIN OSBORNE

WELCOME: CARTOONIST JOHN WRIGHT

PRACTICE PARTNER

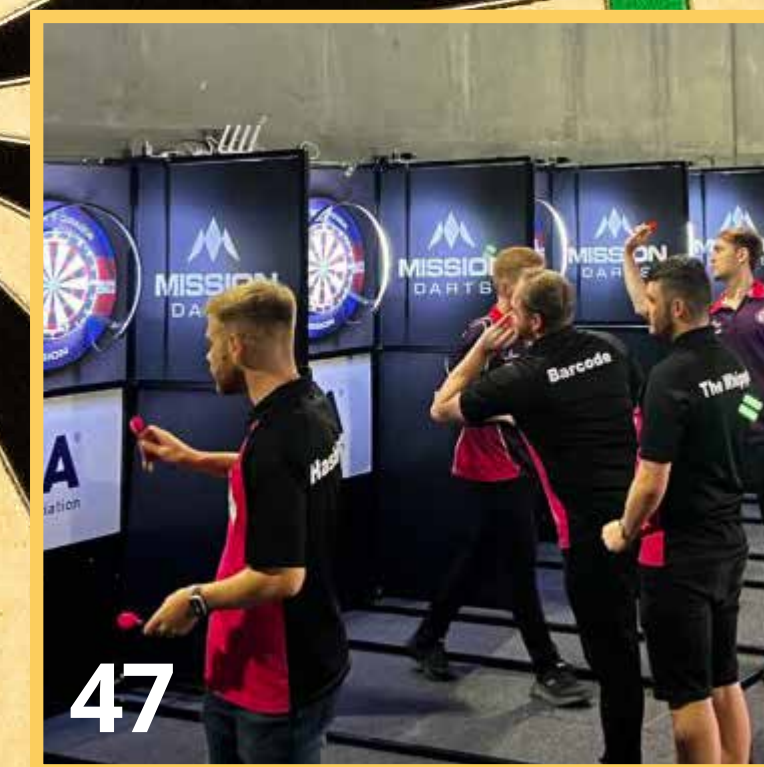
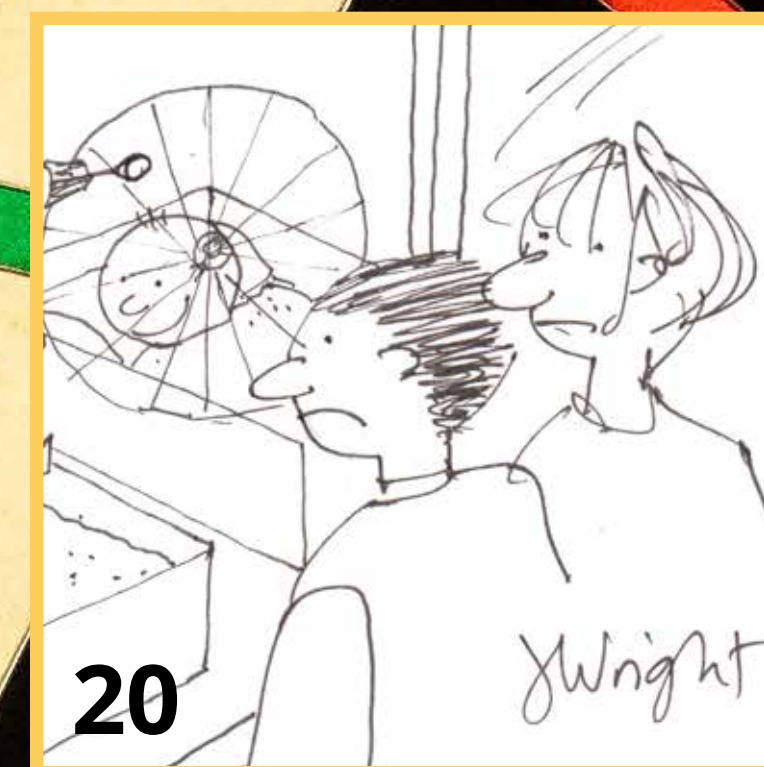
A darts player in a red and black shirt is celebrating, holding a large silver trophy with both hands. He is surrounded by a shower of red and blue confetti. The background shows a darts board and a banner with the 'BETFRED' logo. The player's shirt has 'BROOKE' and 'BETFRED' logos. The trophy has a red ribbon with 'BETFRED' written on it.

SUMMER SPECIAL

Darts EXTRA WORLD

ISSUE 11 - 2023

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Welcome

DESPITE DARTS being more associated with the Winter months and especially Christmas and New Year, Summertime darts often has a fantastic holiday type atmosphere and sense of enjoyment to it. Although, we didn't quite bring the weather to match this time, we have made a **DW EXTRA Summer Special** for your enjoyment.

In some ways elite darts has been witnessing a slow motion generation change over the last few years. The World Matchplay showed this is a stronger light than has been seen previously. The top 4 ranked were all gone in the very early stages and it very soon became apparent that a first time winner was going to lift the Phil Taylor trophy.

Natham Aspinall's triumph was well timed and had a touch of the fairytale to it, although Jonny Clayton's near miss had seemed another 'name on the pot' story waiting to happen.

With the teenage Beau Greaves claiming the Women's event it's safe to say the Matchplay showcased more than one generation of tungsten talent.

Luke Littler underlined the young prodigy and next gen themes when he completed a unique MODUS Super series double.

The Saudi Arabian by-in continues across sports and at a remarkable pace. Surely it can only be a matter of time before the PDC and partners manage to showcase our game in the latest rapid growth market. Word reaches our ears that at least one figure looking to make an impact in darts is now based in the Kingdom.

It might be wise to consider early-on the type of sacrifices that may have to be made or values compromised if the two are to be able to combine?

You may not have had that garden time you wanted but there is no excuse not to put your feet up with a cuppa or tippie of choice and have a good read. We are offering all readers a fantastic summer bonus. Make any purchase over £9 from our **Darts World store** and we will give you our **digital subscription** (normally £15) for the rest of 2023 absolutely **FREE!**





Cool Hand and the Aubergenius

With the top names falling like flies Blackpool was surely the moment for one of these two to grab a major crown. Both have played superbly in certain formats for a couple of years now. Both have won at Pro Tour (inc. European Tour) level and both reached major finals previously.

Luke Humphries produced some super darts over the last couple of months and would have been amongst the favourites regardless of the collapse of the top echelon, he also managed to remove Dirk relatively early on.

Again, Cool Hand was out gunned in the final stages of a vital game. For a player who has worked his way up to the top through winning at every non TV level Luke needs to find that end of tournament accelerator and a ruthlessness at the big moments.

It's a similar story for the Dutchman, he has missed many darts for titles and not truly troubled his opponent both times he reached a major final.

Will one of this mercurial duo break through and if so who's first?



Wrong Target

One frustrating thing about the darts commentariat is that they can find a problem in anything if they are bored enough. The fuss and bother about the effect of the Ally Pally on the rankings is a case in point.

The World Championships is the pinnacle of our sport and our showcase to the world. If you shine there, you should be paid well and it should give you other opportunities for fans to see you again. It should make a huge difference and trying to neutralise it is just plain daft.

Try looking at the actual issues instead of picking one that makes headlines. The UK Open is grossly undervalued. Andrew Gilding is ranked only 22 in the world after winning it and more than once the holder has not made the Premier League whereas the rather lame Masters has become a defacto qualifier, despite not being a ranked event!

Solve that issue and you might have a better balanced system overall.

Talking
Points

GLORY FOR THE ASP & BLACKPOOL'S BEAU

MATCHPLAY MARKS LANDMARK EVENT WITH NEW WINNERS

Words: HARRY MASTERSON
Images: TAYLOR LANNING /PDC



Nathan Aspinall became a two-time PDC Major Champion after he clinched his maiden World Matchplay title at the Winter Gardens, defeating Jonny Clayton with a remarkable display.

The win allowed the man from Stockport to pay for his family home, as he added the Phil Taylor trophy, and £200,000 in prize money, to the UK Open crown, he won back in 2019.

The ASP opened his Matchplay campaign with back-to-back 98+ averages in beating Krzysztof Ratajski in the First Round, clinching a 10-7 win over the Polish Eagle. The Englishman marched into his 3rd consecutive Quarter Final in Blackpool, after beating another former UK Open Champion Danny Noppert 11-9.

The World Matchplay Last 8 draw was as open as it's ever been in what was the competition's 30th staging, with the likes of Michael van Gerwen, Gerwyn Price, Peter Wright, Michael Smith, and Dimitri van den Bergh all out before the Quarter Finals.

Aspinall faced Chris Dobey who had dumped the reigning World Champion out in the Last 16. It was to be no Hollywood though ending on this occasion, as the former UK Open Champion came out a 16-12 winner despite the Bedlington born player leading at the first two intervals.



Nathan would face Joe Cullen in the Semi Finals, with the Rockstar coming into the match having claimed the scalps of Mike de Decker, Daryl Gurney and 2022 Runner Up Gerwyn Price. The Bradford born thrower defeated The Iceman in overtime, claiming a 13-11 victory including 2 finishes of 112.

The Stockport born player was the first man through to the Grand Finale at the Winter Gardens, winning 17-9 in the first Semi Final on the Saturday night with 11 180s and a 116 finish in the 11th leg of the game.

Jonny Clayton came through the other half of the draw, with 6 ton plus checkouts in his Quarter Final win over Ryan Searle before coming through an epic with fellow Red Dragon player Luke Humphries. The Ferret clinched a 17-15 win over the recent 2-time European Darts Matchplay winner, crucially breaking with an 80 checkout in the 32nd leg.

The Final started with five consecutive holds of throw as both players looked to settle any nerves on the Blackpool stage, with the Stockport man including a 110 finish on double 18 in the opening leg.

The Englishman instantly broke in the 2nd mini session with a 108 finish, but still went in after 10 legs at 5-5. The Ferret produced a clinical ton plus checkout that he had showcased throughout the whole tournament, hitting double 12 to finish 141 in the 7th leg.

Aspinall began to put his foot down as he claimed the third session without reply from his

opponent, breaking throw twice as he became the first player to hit double digits in relation to legs won.

The ASP included a 170 finish to claim the UK Open crown back in 2019 where he beat Rob Cross 11-5, and he repeated the trick in Blackpool. Nathan moved into an 11-5 lead with his first bullseye finish of the 2023 World Matchplay, going within 7 legs of his first Winter Gardens title.

The 32-year-old went in at 15-5 as he continued to give the Ferret no room for error in the Final, breaking again with a ton plus checkout after hitting 115 to win the 18th leg.

Clayton stopped what was an 11-leg winning run from Aspinall on double 5, with only Phil Taylor the other player to have achieved the same feat in a major Final.

The Englishman wrapped up victory after hitting the same double with his last dart in hand, as he became the 12th winner of the World Matchplay in the 30th staging of the competition.

"It's an amazing feeling. I'm so happy for me and my family and so proud of myself. I did so well to keep it at 5-5. I was doing Jonny Clayton things! I was taking out those three-dart combinations and that kept me in the game."

"I think that third session was the key. I don't know what it was, but then I suddenly found my scoring, and I finished brilliantly all game."

Jonny Clayton gained large amounts of support through the whole 2023 World

Matchplay after revealing in an interview that his father was suffering from illness. The Ferret's showing at the Winter Gardens will certainly have made his dad/ biggest fan proud, after producing his career best run in Blackpool having reached the Last 16 as his furthest run before this year.

Clayton produced an impressive display to defeat former Matchplay winner Dimitri van den Bergh in the Last 16, claiming an 11-6 win in Blackpool. The former Premier League winner averaged 101.90 with a checkout rate of 57.89% having found the 2nd 170 finish of the tournament in the 4th leg.

"I knew I had to play well tonight, and thankfully I did. It's been very difficult, but I'm here to do a job, and I'm trying my best to do it, so today was a good day."

Beau Greaves became the second player to win the Women's World Matchplay after beating Mikuru Suzuki 6-1 in the Final, claiming successes over Robyn Byrne and Noa-Lyn van Leuven earlier in the day.

The number 1 ranked player on the Women's Series will compete in the Grand Slam of Darts and the 2024 PDC World Championship after winning in Blackpool and went on to claim all 4 Women's Series Events at the Marshall Arena a week later.

A fantastic showing from Nathan Aspinall as he became a 2-time Major Champion at the Winter Gardens, ending a 4 year wait for another major trophy.

ICEMAN

GERWYN
PRICE



FIREBIRD
REDDRAGON

HYBRID
PRO-DESIGN

PRECISION
MILLED

LUKE HUMPHRIES

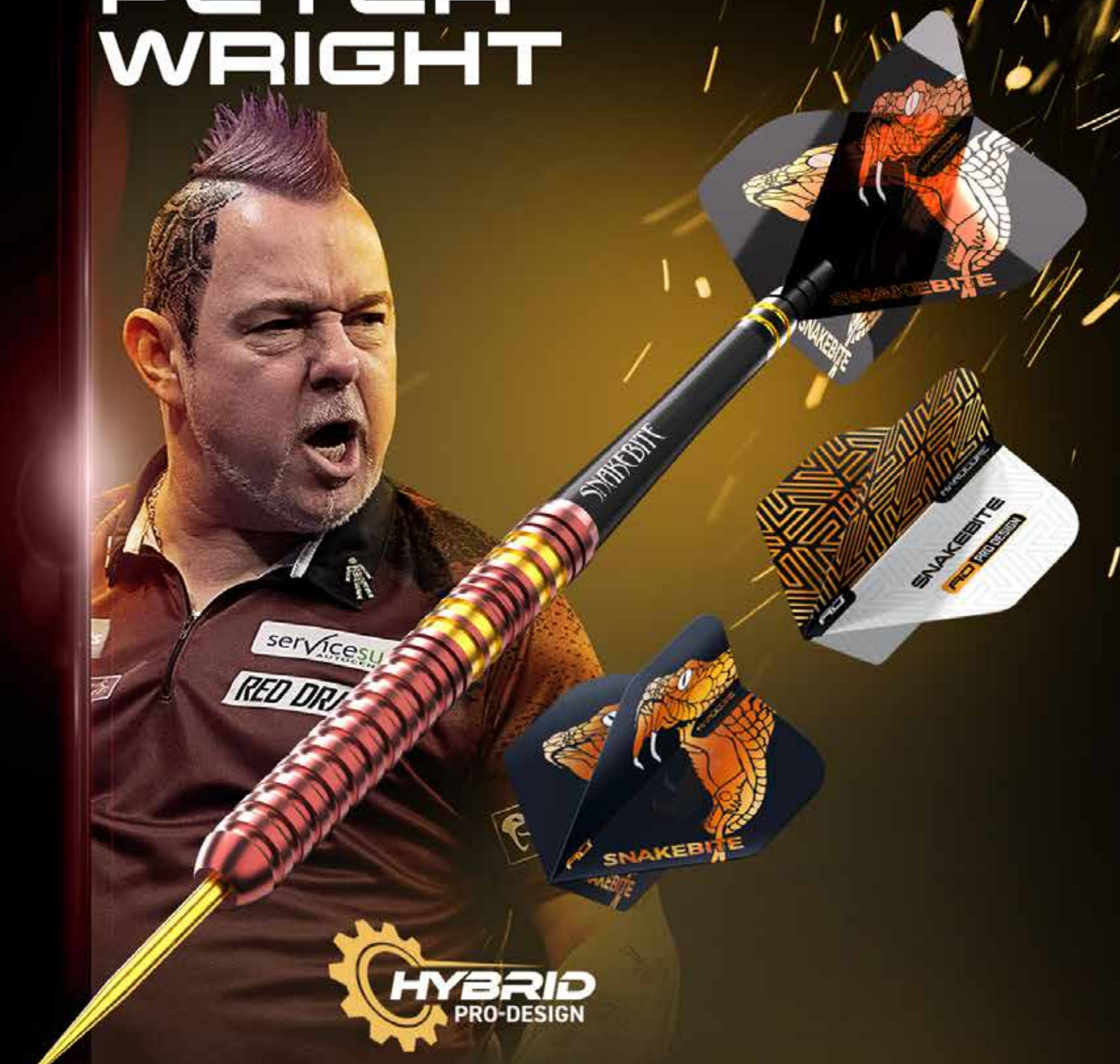
TX2 ATOMISED



REDDRAGON
FD PRO DESIGN

SNAKEBITE

PETER
WRIGHT



COPPER FUSION
REDDRAGON

HYBRID
PRO-DESIGN

Bullseyes & Bounce-Outs!

Our regular lighthearted look at who's hot, and who's not, in world darts. Small incidents can have big consequences. Players and even companies and codes come from nowhere, suddenly move up a level or even dramatically collapse. The signs were there if you'd known where to look.



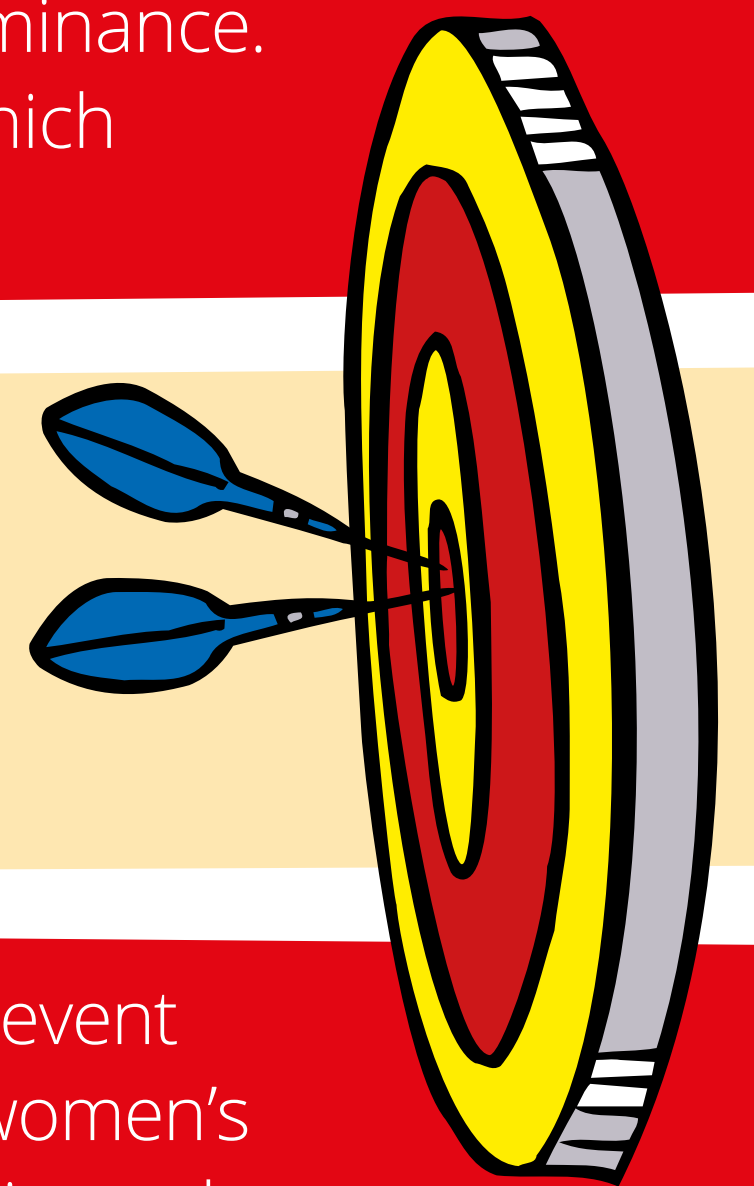
Nathan Aspinall: *The Asp* is already hugely popular, but his Blackpool heroics will lift him another level. Already enjoying a successful time down under he is sure to lead the line more and more in promoting our game.

Beau Greaves: No shock that the Doncaster teenager is on this list. Her first PDC major and another 4 Women's Series victories since our last edition, extend a remarkable dominance. The only question left is can she go on a run in one of the PDC major events for which she has again qualified?

Luke Littler: A 16-year-old collecting more than £80,000 for playing non elite level darts by August! *The Nuke* is writing his own legend at a rapid rate. His defence of the MSS Champions title was a first and a very difficult challenge. Yet he even had time to test different dart set ups along the way.

Betfred: Perhaps the best value for money and enthusiastic sponsorship of a darts event comes from Fred Done's firm. The last couple of years has seen them embrace the women's edition and raise £30k plus per annum for Macmillan Cancer Support all whilst seeming to have a tremendous time.

Rob Cross: Voltage finally ended his two-year wait for a televised PDC crown earlier this month. He had been flattering to deceive for at least a year. Some superb form was undone with almost random dips. Perhaps he has fully turned the corner now?



Bounce-Outs!



Martin Adams: Multiple Lakeside Champion has struggled for a while now and even a change of shirt proved ineffectual as Wolfie donned vivid new apparel for his latest MSS appearances. Surely, he would be better off restricting his appearances and re-building a little of his champion's aura?

James Wade: *The Machine* seems to be on the blink. After a disappointing season James's top 16 place is under serious threat after more than 15 years. Recent times have seen him leave another management company (TSMC) and seem to concentrate more on other areas of life such as advocacy, charity interests and family. Perhaps it's a graceful exit he wants?

WDF: Not their first appearance in this list to be sure. The cancellation of the World Master's is a retrograde step by any measure. Everyone will, of course, wish them well in their long-term plans but was it really too much to ask to keep some continuity after re-starting such a storied event in 2022?

Tour Card Winners '23: After a decent start this year's crop of newly minted Tour Card seem to have been flattering to deceive. Players such as Adam Warner, Graham Hall and Robert Owen had superb years in 2022 and looked likely to make an impact. Whilst some such as Gian Van Veen and Richard Veenstra have been solid enough, none are really impressing possibly adding fuel to the theory that it can be better to just miss out and be able to play in all formats.

HIGHLANDER RETURNS

HENDO HUNTS PDC TOUR CARD

Words: HARRY MASTERSON

Images: PDC

Popular Scot John Henderson, aka The Highlander is aiming to reclaim his PDC Tour Card after an enforced season of sampling the array of opportunities available outside the elite game.

The Highlander was bitterly disappointed to have lost his tour card but has benefitted from the number of competitions now available to players away from the PDC.

"I must admit when I lost my tour card I was devastated and I didn't know where my career was going, what darts I was going to be playing. These last 5-6 months have been absolutely hectic, and I've been as busy as ever, playing the Challenge Tour, Q School at the start of the year and straight onto the MODUS Super Series. Also having good Challenge Tours so I'm playing on the Pro Tour as well."

"Because I'm playing all the time, I feel as though my game's getting back slowly to where it should be and where I want it to be. I've never been so busy, but I shouldn't moan it's my job, I'm enjoying it and I'm playing with a smile on my face again. I'm getting back but it's been so hectic as well as enjoyable."

Hendo has made strong progress on the Winmau Challenge Tour so far this year, claiming one Event win so far, clinching Challenge Tour 7 in Hildesheim where he beat Ron Meulenkamp in the Final whilst also hitting a 105.76 average along the way.



"It's a bit of an endurance test the Challenge Tour if I'm being honest, after losing my card knowing I have to play the Challenge Tour and having to play the two (events) in one day, it's hard. I heard a lot of players speak about it a few years ago saying it would be ok, but having to play it you don't realise how tough it is."

"So I've found it hard, and the standard is very high as well. Thinking you've just lost you're tour card and you come away from playing the best in the world, you expect the Challenge Tour is going to be easier but it's not. I'm putting a lot of practise and preparation in and I'm enjoying it as well."

The Red Dragon player sits 5th on the Challenge Tour Order of Merit, with £175 ranking money between him and 2nd placed Chris Landman. The top 2 on the Winmau Challenge Tour will earn a tour card and a spot at the PDC World Championship, with the next 5 events coming up later this month at the Marshall Arena.

"I got off to a really good start, the last weekend in Milton Keynes wasn't too good and the order of merit shows that Berry van Peer had an excellent weekend winning 3 out of the 5 events, so the number 1 spot looks as though it's gone."

"There are a few players playing for second spot and because I'm playing regular darts now with the Seniors/ MODUS Super Series, my form is coming at the right time. I'm very confident I can get that second spot on the Challenge Tour and claim the rewards from it; I'm looking forward... and I'm confident I can do well."

John will also make his debut on the World Seniors Tour, as he prepares to battle in the World Seniors Darts Matchplay in York. The Scotsman is ranked as the 7th seed for the competition and will face former World Senior Darts Masters champion David Cameron in the First Round.

"To get the invite into the Matchplay was really pleasing, so looking forward to getting back onto the big stage and the television. It's going to be a different experience; one I'm looking forward to and I play David Cameron. I don't know much about David, I don't know him personally, but I know it will be a hard game. I will prepare as I prepare for every other game, and I cannot wait to get to York."

"I went down to Reading last week and played in the tour event, same again I was surprised by the standard. I've watched it before in the past and seen the standard was high with Robert (Thornton) setting the scale."

"He's the man that everyone is trying to beat, so I will be going out to try and end his dominance on the Seniors hopefully, that's the plan. How good would it be to have two Scottish winners in the Seniors especially for Scottish darts all round, looking forward to teaming up with Robert again as well as playing against him."



Henderson has impressed whilst playing in the MODUS Super Series having claimed a victory at the start of the year. The Scotsman has enjoyed the opportunities provided by MODUS in a format that gives him plenty of time in a very competitive environment.

"During the pandemic, personally I said the reason I lost my card was that I wasn't

playing regular, we were going to Germany playing for 5 days and then nothing for two months."

"Now with the MODUS Super Series, were getting to play for three days and if you qualify through top spot, you get through to Saturday. Playing all that is really helping my game yes, it's a shorter format which you've got to try and get used to: playing best of 7, Challenge Tour best of 9 and Pro Tour best of 11, so everything's different."

"There's no easy games either, the ADC Qualifiers are coming through to play and you're not knowing what to expect. You don't know some of them so it's hard and challenging but also enjoyable as the format is fantastic, you get the opportunity even if you don't get through on the Wednesday, you've got the Thursday and the Friday to qualify."

The Highlander continues to receive full support from manufacturer Red Dragon, having been backed all through his darting career.



"Red Dragon have backed me ever since I qualified for the Grand Slam back in 2010, so they've backed me all the way through my professional career. It makes life so much easier, then losing my card last year and they said they would still support me, it means the world."

"I'm working on new equipment which Red Dragon have been fantastic about and I cannot thank them enough. Their equipment has been brilliant and hopefully this new equipment can take me further in my career."

John will return to action in all three of these formats as we head out of the Summer. His army of fans and friends will be cheering him on in the hope of another *Highlander* sequel.

MEDIA MATTERS

The Art of the Press Conference

Sports stars try to dodge them. Even many journalists aren't fans. But love them or loathe them, press conferences are a part of the furniture.

Earlier in the history of this column, I considered the evolution of the darts pundit, from the punchy statement to the deeper analytics. But the press conference feels like something which rarely changes.

In fact, they often have the feeling of damaged limitations. For a reporter, they could go really wrong (Joe Kinnear at Newcastle, anyone?) but do they ever go really right?

Over the last year, I have watched the new manager of my football team Middlesbrough, Michael Carrick, handle them with a reserved and guarded finesse.

However probing or interesting the team of reporters who cover the Boro beat are, they can't seem to chisel away at him. It is

a sight you see time and again in the more media-drilled sports.

Some choose to dodge the obstacle altogether. Northern Irish golfer Rory McIlroy recently swerved from his pre-Open presser entirely.

As far as our sport is concerned however, I am inclined to make a defence of the thing.

It was a reality I faced when at the World Matchplay recently, where I attended 12 separate post-match press conferences over the course of the weekend I was there.

My personal favourite and one which I think illustrates the defence quite well was Dirk van Duijvenbode's after his defeat of Kim Huybrechts.

Dirk can be a tricky customer. His interview with sponsors Betfred, conducted just before the general conference, was at times a little awkward. (Not for the fault of the interviewer Mark Pearson, it has to be said, but van

Thomas Bartley



Duijvenbode can sometimes stretch out the pauses in his answers and play indirect.)

The question I was going to ask Dirk luckily came quite easily, as about one minute before he set foot in the media room, Damon Heta had strode out swinging a cricket bat raring for his walk-on. He was met, as readers will recall, with a frosty Blackpool reception.

So, I asked Dirk, what would his advice be for Damon on how to use the crowd to your advantage? His response (which you can see in full on Darts World's Twitter) was frank and insightful.

The purpose of this anecdote was not self-promotion. Dirk could just as easily have batted (pardon the pun) my question back with little thought. Instead, the gamble paid off, we all got some good lines and a unique perspective on the issue. Maybe the whole thing can sometimes work well.

BULLSEYE FOR HOME INTERNATIONALS

EDDIE NORMAN HAD A DREAM

Words: PATRICK CHAPLIN

Images: DARTS WORLD & PATRICK CHAPLIN ARCHIVE

It is fifty years this year that the first-ever darts Home International took place in 1973.

In the early 1960s, darts businessman Eddie Norman had a dream. In 1962 he and his brother Peter, founders of the *House of Darts International* based in Bristol, founded what was to become the West of England Darts Organisation.

At that time Eddie's the thoughts of the National Inter-City or National County Darts League leading on to International Darts Championships between England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland were always on his mind. So, he decided that he would organise the First Home International Darts Championship "or die in the attempt."

In order to pursue his dream Eddie met with the only national darts association extant at that time. Throughout the 1960s he had numerous meetings with Johnny

Ross of the National Darts Association of Great Britain (NDAGB) to discuss the possibility of organising a home international through his Association. John was very keen on the ideas but it was always the same problem – Finance. (John Ross shown right, 'at the mic' – Image © PC Archive)

Money was the primary sticking point but the idea – the dream – was never shelved and Eddie's resolve never faltered. Then, in mid-1971, Eddie put a plan to Bristol-based Berni Inns. He told them that he would like to organise a Home International Darts Championship in Bristol between England, Scotland, Ireland, and Wales and then asked if they would sponsor the event. The international would be scheduled to coincide with the celebration in 1973 of the 600th anniversary of Bristol's County status.



A month later Berni Inns agreed to Eddie's suggested five-year deal but with a firm proviso that he stayed in charge of the organisation of the event for that term. They also agreed that the inaugural event would be held in Bristol but that the second would be held in London at The Lyceum (which was owned by the group).



With his dream on the edge of fulfilment, Eddie started planning the first home international in earnest in mid-1972. The event would be in a giant circus-style marquee on Bristol Durdham Downs and Berni Inns covered every aspect of the sponsorship. Eddie asked His Grace the

Duke of Beaufort, whose country seat was twelve miles away at Badminton House, and the Duke accepted.

For the teams, Eddie contacted Ossie Turner, Secretary of the Welsh NDAGB, Louis Donohue in Ireland then Scotland's Frank Quinn, President of the Scottish Darts Association (SDA) and then Olly Croft to select and manage an England team. They all agreed.

Soon, everything was in place for the great day – Sunday 29th July 1973. The teams and managers all arrived at the hotel for the pre-match dinner. Eddie described the tournament as *'a glorious day.'* The 1,000 tickets allocated for the event were completely sold out and organisers had to turn people away on the day.

Each country's team consisted of seven players and each player played one game of 801 against an opponent from another country, drawn out of the hat beforehand. All games were played from a 7' 6" throw line.

The first winners of the inaugural Home International were England (sponsored by the Trulon darts manufacturer) and team captain Tommy O'Regan gratefully accepted the trophy from the Duke of Beaufort. Man-of-the-match was England's Cliff Inglis,

receiving a special prize for being the most consistent player. Out of a possible total of 21 points England scored 17, one point for each of the seventeen individual games won. Wales came second with 11 points, Scotland third with eight points and Ireland in fourth and final place with six points.

Darts World reported that England played strongly throughout and deserved their victory. Olly Croft, manager of the England team said

"Today will be the most memorable occasion for the England team and myself on winning the first-ever home international" adding "For me the greatest thing is at last knowing that I made the right choice in picking the best team and the best captain, Tommy O'Regan."

Darts World pronounced the tournament as 'an outstanding success' and confidently predicted that the Home Internationals would become 'a major event on the darts calendar' which, of course, they did.

Eddie's dream of organising the first-ever full home international was realised in July 1973. However, fate (or rather the BDO) had decreed that thereafter it was out of his hands. Eddie accepted the situation and moved on.

The full story of the first Home International can be read in issue #160 of *Darts History* at winmau.com



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THE CHAMPION

LITTLER DEFENDS MSS CROWN

Words: CJ HARRIS-HULME
Images: MODUS

The fourth phase of the MODUS Super Series was completed when 'Luke Nuked *The Wizard*' to claim the trophy after a superb climax to the latest Champions Week Saturday finale:

Little, who entered Saturday's finale having won Group B on Thursday and Friday, began the night by winning both of his group phase matches to progress through to the Semi-Finals, where he then came up against 2023's form man, Berry Van Peer, the teenage sensation defeated the Dutchman, 4-2, to book his place in the final.



In the decider, Littler came up against Colin Osborne for the second time on the night. Darts World ambassador and former UK Open finalist Osborne again played above his previous form to defeat Steve West in a last leg decider in his semi-final, and once again, *'The Nuke'* was victorious, as he defeated the former UK Open finalist, 4-2, to pick up the £20,000 top prize and become the first ever player to successfully defend their Champions Week title.

No player had even looked like going back-to-back at the MSS previously but Littler looked strong from his opening Group game on Thursday and was even able to test experimental dart sets and set ups. Steve West looked likely to rival the young prodigy as he also seemed to find much of his best form, including the first Champions Week 9-darter, during this phase.

Also looking strong all week was Jeroen Mioch. *The Dutchman* looked to maintain the momentum from winning the final week of standard play and repeat the trick once again. For a while he looked likely to pull it off, however a nervy encounter in his opening finals night game put paid to that.



The Wizard on the other hand had pursued the opposite course. Not at all fluent, in his early weekday matches, Colin opted for using his experience to tough out wins when they were needed and fly under the radar finals night. On finals night itself the Derby based thrower managed to find that other gear and neutralise Reece Robinson's 180 scoring before sending West home early.

But the imperious youngster Littler was a bridge too far for a battling Osborne. Once again, the night belonged to the young with a statement win and apace in the MSS Hall of fame.

Phase 5
will have quite some work ahead if it is to compare.

**Modus Super Series
Champions Week**

**FINALE
SATURDAY 5TH AUGUST**

GROUP ONE

Berry Van Peer **4 - 1** Jeroen Mioch
Steve West **4 - 1** Berry Van Peer
Steve West **4 - 0** Jeroen Mioch

GROUP TWO

Luke Littler **4 - 0** Colin Osborne
Colin Osborne **4 - 0** Reece Robinson
Luke Littler **4 - 2** Reece Robinson

SEMI-FINALS

Colin Osborne **4 - 3** Steve West
Luke Littler **4 - 2** Berry Van Peer

FINAL

Luke Littler **4 - 2** Colin Osborne

THE WIZARD



1X
CHAMPIONSHIP OF DARTS WINNER

UK OPEN FINALIST

COLIN OSBORNE

UNBELIEVABLE (EMF)

HOMETOWN MIDDLESBROUGH	DARTS WINMAU 206
NICKNAME THE WIZARD	COMPETITIVE 9-DARTERS 6
BIRTHDATE 19-06-1975	PDC TITLES 7

FUT

Well yet again the speed at which our beloved game raises you up and then dumps you back down again takes the breath away.

Back down to the fantastic MODUS Live Lounge in Portsmouth a couple of weeks ago for another go at Champions Week. Despite holding several records at the Super Series I have never quite done my record justice on these weeks.

Starting on Thursday in Group B seemed to suit me well although I had struggled a little for fluency in the period just beforehand. It'll surprise no one that Luke Littler was the dominant force in our group! The young man has a remarkable talent, focus and all the fearless advantages of youth.

However, the rest of the group was very nip and tuck and it was important not to panic after an average performance. I have played this game a long time and had begun to feel a little more comfortable.

Night two saw me playing strong stuff, in patches, and I produced at the right time in order to leapfrog the excellent Danny Lauby to claim the last finals night spot.

The finals night MSS format is a little odd and throws up the possibility of playing the same person more than once. Just my luck that it was *The Nuke!*

Colin Osborne is a multiple Pro Tour title winner, Championship of Darts winner (2009), and a UK Open finalist.
@colozzy180

In our first encounter I was a little slow off the mark and was easily brushed aside. I regrouped quickly and benefitted from that first game.

Anyone watching my encounter with Christian Kist a few weeks ago may remember that when you're playing someone in such superb form you have to let them know early that they will not have it easy and that you will be with them all the way. It was the same here. I started with a smooth 12 darter and ran out a 4-0 winner with a 103 average.

Steve West had been playing superbly all week and proved a popular addition to boot. Most folk expected a West vs Littler finale. But I am not a fan of scripts.

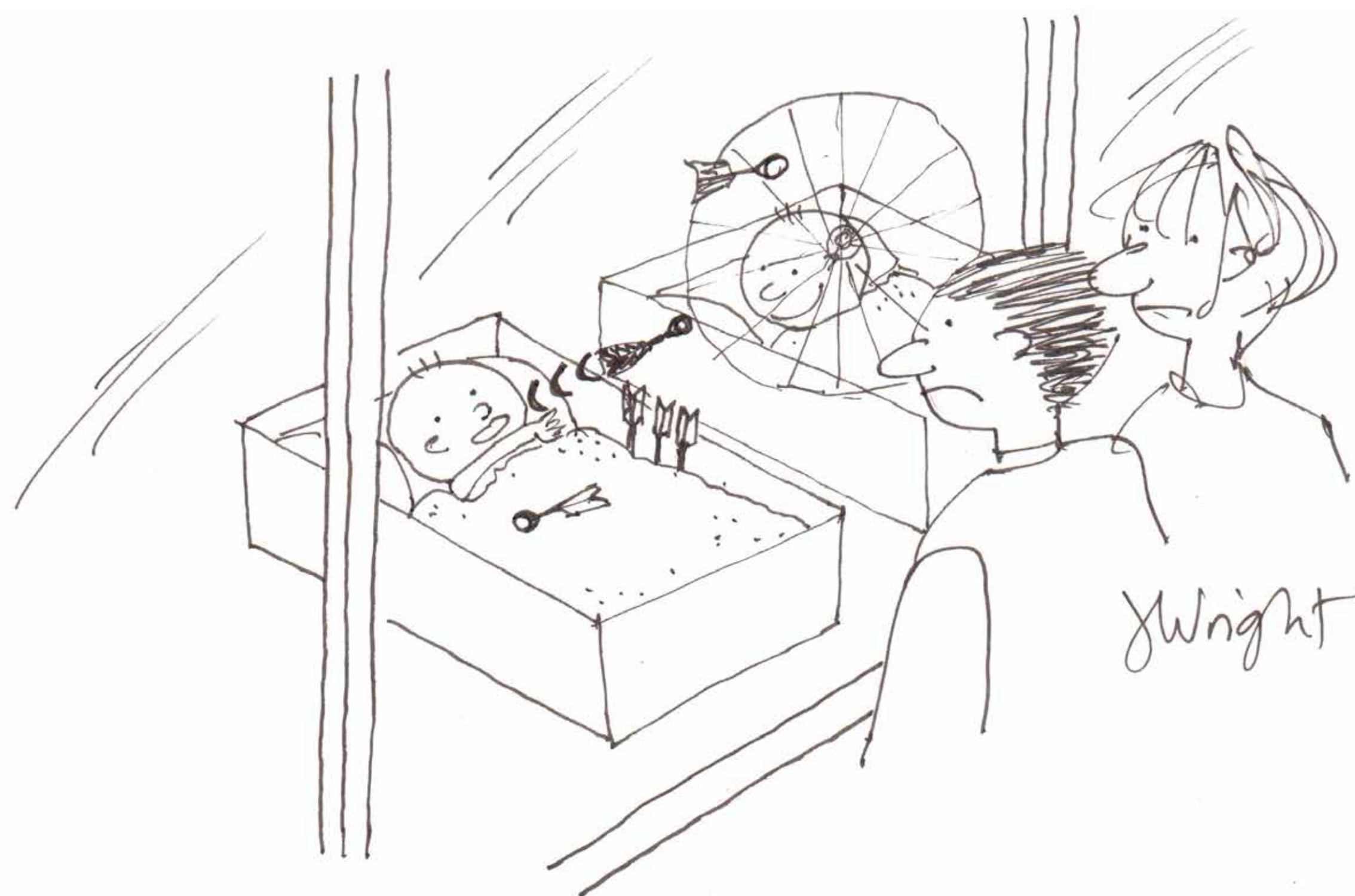
The final did not go my way as sometimes you try a little bit hard, you think you have to do more than you do and as a result you go slightly over the top and things don't happen.

Luke dispatched me comfortably after I missed an early chance to get a lead. Fair play to him, it's not easy to win one of these MSS phases and going back-to-back at 16-years-of-age is outstanding.

Overall though I had to be pleased with my best ever champions week result and looked forward to the Challenge Tour with relish. But that, dear reader, proved a different story!

THE WRIGHT

AMG



It was sweet them giving us a viewing window to watch the parents, but I thought getting a dartboard painted would be more fun.

Since stepping in to keep Darts World alive, in 2020, I have wanted a regular cartoon to feature. We could quite seem to find a darts fan who drew, but it just shows sometimes you have to wait a while to get what you want.

We are delighted to welcome **John Wright** to our team of contributors. John contributes to the Liverpool Echo, Manchester Evening News, the BBC and The Spectator.

Recently, in the DW bunker, we were discussing the astounding ability of some of the next generation of players currently making waves throughout our game. That very afternoon this cartoon dropped in our inbox.

We look forward to featuring more of John's work across all of our platforms and would thoroughly recommend you check out more of his creations and some great merch.

John Wright's cartoons as T shirts, tea towels and mugs are available at moretvicar.com/collection/tasmanian-teddies



The Images That Captured Modern Darts

“As a schoolboy I was captivated by the space race, and in July 1969, not yet in my teens, I like millions of others, was thrilled as I watched grainy black and white images on my television of the lunar module from Apollo 11, carrying Astronauts Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin, touch down on the surface of the moon and the world heard a beep, followed by a crackly voice declaring, “The Eagle Has Landed!”

It was an incredible moment to realise that when I looked up that night into the dark sky at the bright object which often looks like a giant smiley face looking down on us, that human beings had finally reached this far off piece of rock that orbits our planet.

I remember my feeling of utter amazement as Neil Armstrong climbed down the landing crafts ladder and become the first person to step onto the surface of the moon and he uttered the immortal words “one small step for man but a giant leap for mankind”.

My reminiscence of this historic event from days gone by, in Darts World, may seem irrelevant, but that magnificent moment was my inspiration for this “One Shot.”

As a photographer I always try to think “out of the box” as I strive to produce something that is different, interesting and pertinent.

The 2019 World Matchplay Championship was taking place at its traditional venue of the beautiful Winter Gardens in Blackpool and it coincided with the 50th Anniversary of that momentous day, which had so captured my young imagination, when “humans dared to go where no humans had been before”.

In the weeks prior to the tournament, I thought endlessly of how I could combine that youthful excitement with my now professional life into one special image that would celebrate both events.

To accomplish this I did not want something false, something manipulated in photoshop or any other computer programme, it had to be a photograph created purely by photographic skills.

The answer came to me in my ultra-wide 8mm lens that makes the subject of a photo look spherical and floating in a black background.

That gave me the how, but what about the where. After years of covering the tournament and countless hours in the

iconic venue I racked my brains as the best place to capture the image, which I admit, had become an obsession.

There were many options around the venue, until I realised, there was only one place to get the photo I had in my mind, and that was from above the Oche looking out towards the players and the audience.

I went around to the back of the stage and climbed ladders secured to the sections of crossed metal tubing which the set is attached to and on to the rickety scaffolding boards at the top where I finally nailed my tribute to those pioneers of space exploration and the more terrestrial stars entertaining us with my version of ‘Planet Darts’ (or even Darts World) . . .

I hope you all think it was worth the effort. ”

Lawrence Lustig is a former official photographer to the PDC – for this image he used a Canon 1dx mk2 with an 8-14mm zoom lens at 8mm on F4 at a speed of 1/320th with an iso of 3200.



Darts
WORLD
EXTRA

Darts World Extra
UKDA Results Supplement



UKDA
United Kingdom Darts Association

2023/24 SEASON FIXTURE LIST



Fixture 1
2nd - 3rd September 2023

Derbyshire v Kent
London v Cleveland
Northamptonshire v Cheshire
Oxfordshire v Hertfordshire
Sussex v Cambridgeshire
West Midlands v Bye

Fixture 2
30th September - 1st October 2023

Bye v Sussex
Cambridgeshire v Oxfordshire
Cheshire v West Midlands
Cleveland v Derbyshire
Hertfordshire v London
Kent v Northamptonshire

Fixture 3
4th - 5th November 2023

Cheshire v Bye
Derbyshire v Hertfordshire
London v Cambridgeshire
Northamptonshire v Cleveland
Oxfordshire v Sussex
West Midlands v Kent

Fixture 4
2nd - 3rd December 2023

Bye v Oxfordshire
Cambridgeshire v Derbyshire
Cleveland v West Midlands
Hertfordshire v Northamptonshire
Kent v Cheshire
Sussex v London

Fixture 5
6th - 7th January 2024

Cheshire v Cleveland
Derbyshire v Sussex
Kent v Bye
London v Oxfordshire
Northamptonshire v Cambridgeshire
West Midlands v Hertfordshire

Fixture 6
3rd - 4th February 2024

Bye v London
Cambridgeshire v West Midlands
Cleveland v Kent
Hertfordshire v Cheshire
Oxfordshire v Derbyshire
Sussex v Northamptonshire

Fixture 7
2nd - 3rd March 2024

Cheshire v Cambridgeshire
Cleveland v Bye
Derbyshire v London
Kent v Hertfordshire
Northamptonshire v Oxfordshire
West Midlands v Sussex

Fixture 8
6th - 7th April 2024

Bye v Derbyshire
Cambridgeshire v Kent
Hertfordshire v Cleveland
London v Northamptonshire
Oxfordshire v West Midlands
Sussex v Cheshire

Fixture 9
27th - 28th April 2024

Cheshire v Oxfordshire
Cleveland v Cambridgeshire
Hertfordshire v Bye
Kent v Sussex
Northamptonshire v Derbyshire
West Midlands v London

Fixture 10
18th - 19th May 2024

Cambridgeshire v Hertfordshire
Derbyshire v West Midlands
London v Cheshire
Northamptonshire v Bye
Oxfordshire v Kent
Sussex v Cleveland

Fixture 11
15th-16th June 2024

Bye v Cambridgeshire
Cheshire v Derbyshire
Cleveland v Oxfordshire
Hertfordshire v Sussex
Kent v London
West Midlands v Northamptonshire



ANDY WHEELER
FISHERIES
CONSULTANCY
LIMITED



NATIONAL LEAGUE 2023-2024
CHAMPIONSHIP FIXTURES





Fixture 1
2nd - 3rd September 2023

Cornwall v Warwickshire
Essex v Glamorgan
Humberside v Yorkshire
Lancashire v Dorset
Lincolnshire v Bye
Staffordshire v Hampshire

Fixture 2
30th September - 1st October 2023

Bye v Humberside
Dorset v Lincolnshire
Glamorgan v Staffordshire
Hampshire v Cornwall
Warwickshire v Lancashire
Yorkshire v Essex

Fixture 3
4th - 5th November 2023

Cornwall v Glamorgan
Dorset v Bye
Essex v Humberside
Lancashire v Hampshire
Lincolnshire v Warwickshire
Staffordshire v Yorkshire

Fixture 4
2nd - 3rd December 2023

Bye v Essex
Glamorgan v Lancashire
Hampshire v Lincolnshire
Humberside v Staffordshire
Warwickshire v Dorset
Yorkshire v Cornwall

Fixture 5
6th - 7th January 2024

Cornwall v Humberside
Dorset v Hampshire
Lancashire v Yorkshire
Lincolnshire v Glamorgan
Staffordshire v Essex
Warwickshire v Bye

Fixture 6
3rd - 4th February 2024

Bye v Staffordshire
Essex v Cornwall
Glamorgan v Dorset
Hampshire v Warwickshire
Humberside v Lancashire
Yorkshire v Lincolnshire

Fixture 7
2nd - 3rd March 2024

Cornwall v Staffordshire
Dorset v Yorkshire
Hampshire v Bye
Lancashire v Essex
Lincolnshire v Humberside
Warwickshire v Glamorgan

Fixture 8
6th - 7th April 2024

Bye v Cornwall
Essex v Lincolnshire
Glamorgan v Hampshire
Humberside v Dorset
Staffordshire v Lancashire
Yorkshire v Warwickshire

Fixture 9
27th - 28th April 2024

Dorset v Essex
Glamorgan v Bye
Hampshire v Yorkshire
Lancashire v Cornwall
Lincolnshire v Staffordshire
Warwickshire v Humberside

Fixture 10
18th - 19th May 2024

Cornwall v Lincolnshire
Essex v Warwickshire
Humberside v Hampshire
Lancashire v Bye
Staffordshire v Dorset
Yorkshire v Glamorgan

Fixture 11
15th - 16th June 2024

Bye v Yorkshire
Dorset v Cornwall
Glamorgan v Humberside
Hampshire v Essex
Lincolnshire v Lancashire
Warwickshire v Staffordshire



**NATIONAL LEAGUE 2023-2024
PREMIERSHIP FIXTURES**





Fixture 1
2nd - 3rd September 2023

Nottinghamshire v County Durham
 Salopian v Clwyd
 Surrey v West of England
 Wiltshire v Middlesex
 Worcestershire v Norfolk

Fixture 2
30th September - 1st October 2023

Clwyd v Nottinghamshire
 County Durham v Wiltshire
 Middlesex v Worcestershire
 Norfolk v Surrey
 West of England v Salopian

Fixture 3
4th - 5th November 2023

County Durham v Middlesex
 Nottinghamshire v West of England
 Salopian v Norfolk
 Surrey v Worcestershire
 Wiltshire v Clwyd

Fixture 4
2nd - 3rd December 2023

Clwyd v County Durham
 Middlesex v Surrey
 Norfolk v Nottinghamshire
 West of England v Wiltshire
 Worcestershire v Salopian

Fixture 5
3rd - 4th February 2024

Clwyd v Middlesex
 County Durham v West of England
 Nottinghamshire v Worcestershire
 Salopian v Surrey
 Wiltshire v Norfolk

Fixture 6
2nd - 3rd March 2024

Middlesex v Salopian
 Norfolk v County Durham
 Surrey v Nottinghamshire
 West of England v Clwyd
 Worcestershire v Wiltshire

Fixture 7
6th - 7th April 2024

Clwyd v Norfolk
 County Durham v Worcestershire
 Nottinghamshire v Salopian
 West of England v Middlesex
 Wiltshire v Surrey

Fixture 8
27th - 28th April 2024

Middlesex v Nottinghamshire
 Norfolk v West of England
 Salopian v Wiltshire
 Surrey v County Durham
 Worcestershire v Clwyd

Fixture 9
18th - 19th May 2024

Clwyd v Surrey
 County Durham v Salopian
 Norfolk v Middlesex
 West of England v Worcestershire
 Wiltshire v Nottinghamshire



NATIONAL LEAGUE 2023-2024
DIVISION TWO FIXTURES





Fixture 1
2nd - 3rd September 2023

Breconshire v Montgomery & Radnor
Cumbria v Northumberland
Isle of Wight v Bedfordshire
Pembrokeshire v Wirral
Shropshire v Gloucestershire

Fixture 2
30th September - 1st October 2023

Bedfordshire v Pembrokeshire
Gloucestershire v Breconshire
Montgomery & Radnor v Isle of Wight
Northumberland v Shropshire
Wirral v Cumbria

Fixture 3
4th - 5th November 2023

Cumbria v Bedfordshire
Isle of Wight v Breconshire
Northumberland v Gloucestershire
Pembrokeshire v Montgomery & Radnor
Shropshire v Wirral

Fixture 4
2nd - 3rd December 2023

Bedfordshire v Shropshire
Breconshire v Pembrokeshire
Isle of Wight v Gloucestershire
Montgomery & Radnor v Cumbria
Wirral v Northumberland

Fixture 5
3rd - 4th February 2024

Cumbria v Breconshire
Gloucestershire v Wirral
Northumberland v Bedfordshire
Pembrokeshire v Isle of Wight
Shropshire v Montgomery & Radnor

Fixture 6
2nd - 3rd March 2024

Bedfordshire v Wirral
Breconshire v Shropshire
Isle of Wight v Cumbria
Montgomery & Radnor v Northumberland
Pembrokeshire v Gloucestershire

Fixture 7
6th - 7th April 2024

Cumbria v Pembrokeshire
Gloucestershire v Bedfordshire
Northumberland v Breconshire
Shropshire v Isle of Wight
Wirral v Montgomery & Radnor

Fixture 8
27th - 28th April 2024

Breconshire v Wirral
Cumbria v Gloucestershire
Isle of Wight v Northumberland
Montgomery & Radnor v Bedfordshire
Pembrokeshire v Shropshire

Fixture 9
18th - 19th May 2024

Bedfordshire v Breconshire
Gloucestershire v Montgomery & Radnor
Northumberland v Pembrokeshire
Shropshire v Cumbria
Wirral v Isle of Wight



NATIONAL LEAGUE 2023-2024
DIVISION THREE FIXTURES





Fixture 1
2nd - 3rd September 2023

Buckinghamshire v Bye
Gwynedd v Tyne & Wear
Leicestershire v Suffolk
Merseyside v Berkshire
Somerset v Devon
The Black Country v Gwent

Fixture 2
30th September - 1st October 2023

Berkshire v Leicestershire
Bye v Merseyside
Devon v Buckinghamshire
Gwent v Gwynedd
Suffolk v The Black Country
Tyne & Wear v Somerset

Fixture 3
4th - 5th November 2023

Buckinghamshire v Tyne & Wear
Devon v Bye
Gwynedd v Suffolk
Leicestershire v Merseyside
Somerset v Gwent
The Black Country v Berkshire

Fixture 4
2nd - 3rd December 2023

Berkshire v Gwynedd
Bye v Leicestershire
Gwent v Buckinghamshire
Merseyside v The Black Country
Suffolk v Somerset
Tyne & Wear v Devon

Fixture 5
6th - 7th January 2024

Buckinghamshire v Suffolk
Devon v Gwent
Gwynedd v Merseyside
Somerset v Berkshire
The Black Country v Leicestershire
Tyne & Wear v Bye

Fixture 6
3rd - 4th February 2024

Berkshire v Buckinghamshire
Bye v The Black Country
Gwent v Tyne & Wear
Leicestershire v Gwynedd
Merseyside v Somerset
Suffolk v Devon

Fixture 7
2nd - 3rd March 2024

Buckinghamshire v Merseyside
Devon v Berkshire
Gwent v Bye
Gwynedd v The Black Country
Somerset v Leicestershire
Tyne & Wear v Suffolk

Fixture 8
6th - 7th April 2024

Berkshire v Tyne & Wear
Bye v Gwynedd
Leicestershire v Buckinghamshire
Merseyside v Devon
Suffolk v Gwent
The Black Country v Somerset

Fixture 9
27th - 28th April 2024

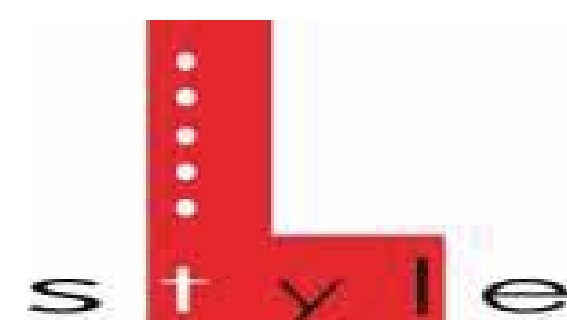
Buckinghamshire v The Black Country
Devon v Leicestershire
Gwent v Berkshire
Somerset v Gwynedd
Suffolk v Bye
Tyne & Wear v Merseyside

Fixture 10
18th - 19th May 2024

Berkshire v Suffolk
Bye v Somerset
Gwynedd v Buckinghamshire
Leicestershire v Tyne & Wear
Merseyside v Gwent
The Black Country v Devon

Fixture 11
15th-16th June 2024

Berkshire v Bye
Buckinghamshire v Somerset
Devon v Gwynedd
Gwent v Leicestershire
Suffolk v Merseyside
Tyne & Wear v The Black Country



NATIONAL LEAGUE 2023-2024
DIVISION ONE FIXTURES





Find venues and clubs to play darts, wherever you are

The new Where to Play Darts app will locate local darting venues with both steel-tip and electronic dartboards.

Got a favourite place to play?

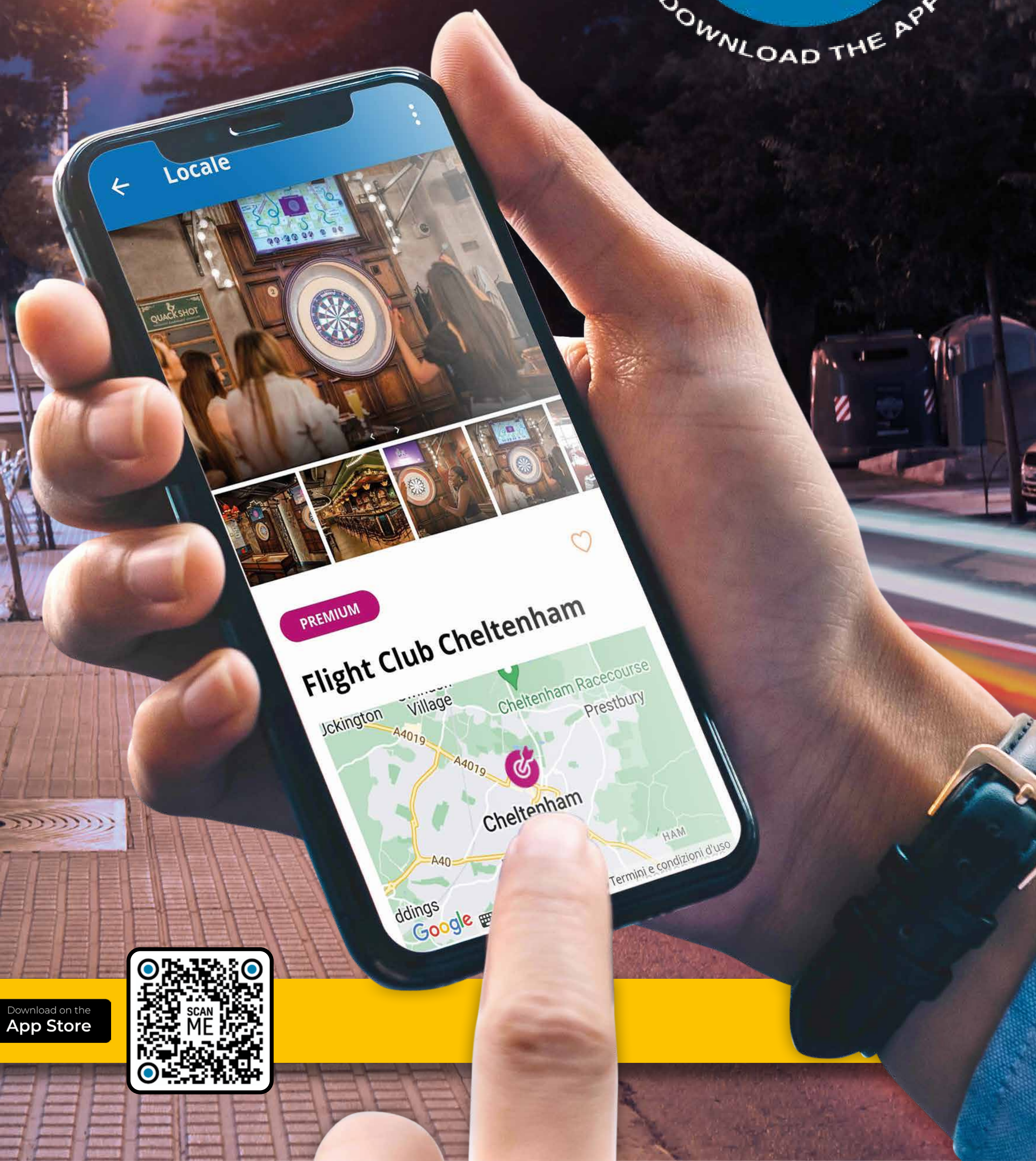
You can add a new venue to the map as well as being informed about events and tournaments in your area.

Owners of darts clubs

You can add events and photos to attract new customers.

Add points of interest to your personalised map

Keep notified about new events, tournaments and other initiatives within a 100km radius.



FREE DOWNLOAD





THE GRATEFUL EIGHT

ADC OPEN TOUR PRODUCES OCTUPLET OF WINNERS

Words: HARRY MASTERSON

Images: ADC

Wales internationals Michael Huntley and Connor Hopkins were amongst the winners in the Final weekend of the ADC Winmau Open Series, with Hopkins securing his TV Debut at the MODUS Super Series. 2-time Champions Week winner Luke Littler and Tom Lonsdale claimed the other two events, with the 16 events now complete for the year.

The ADC Women's Championship Tour also concluded with four new winners in Bristol, as Samantha Kirton and Lorraine Hyde found victories in Events 9 and 10 on the Saturday. Angela Kirkwood and Chris Savvery claimed the Final 2 events of the Women's Championship Tour, but it's Kim Holden who topped the table with 46pts closely followed by Deta Hedman who finished 1 point behind.

The lineup for the LP Metal Detecting Women's Championship Tour Finals is now secured, with the event scheduled for the 18th of November from the MODUS Live Lounge. Lisa Ashton, Eleanor Cairns, Rebecca Brouse, Angela Kirkwood, Jody Hancock, and Samantha Kirton along with the top 2, will all make the trip to Portsmouth later in the year which will be broadcast.

The opening Winmau Open Series of the weekend saw Luke Littler continue to show the talent he possesses at just 16 years of age. The Nuke included an impressive first 9 dart average of 118.74 in clinching a 5-4 last leg decider against Johnny Haines in the Semi Finals at Wellsway Sports Centre, in a match which included 8 180s with Luke hitting 6 over 9 legs played.

The 2-time MODUS Super Series Champions week winner secured another trip to the Live Lounge after beating Darren O'Neill 6-3 in the Final of Event 13, finding his first ton plus average of the tournament, scoring 101.42 and again finding 6 180s.

Winmau Open Series Event 14 saw a battle of two Welsh internationals, with both looking to secure TV debuts at Wellsway Sports Centre. Connor



Hopkins defeated Event 13 winner Luke Littler in the Semi Finals 5-3 with a first 9 dart average of 104.92 average, coming through his half having beaten the likes of Martyn Turner, Ian Harty and Matthew Washbrooke earlier in the day.

Kieran Harris came through the other

half having beaten compatriot Michael Huntley 5-1 in the Semi Finals including a 72 checkout to break throw in the 3rd leg. The Welsh international battled past the likes of Robert Comben, Adam Serpell and Paul Higgins, to secure his maiden appearance in a Winmau Open Series Final.

It was one way traffic though in the Final as the 18-year-old Welsh international claimed

a whitewash (6-0) victory in the Final, securing his debut at the MODUS Super Series later in the year. Hopkins included checkouts of 136 and 93 to break the throw in the 2nd and 6th legs of the Final in Bristol to conclude Saturday's action.

Michael Huntley reached a Final in the ADC Championship Tour last year but went



one better in the Winmau Open Series after beating Neil Meneer 6-4 in the Final of Event 15, to make it two Welsh winners at Wellsway Sports Centre.

The 51-year-old secures a return to the MODUS Super Series through the Amateur Darts Circuit, having beaten the likes of

Mark Graham in the Semi Finals and Brett Claydon in a last leg decider in the Last 16 to prevail in the opening competition on Sunday.

Huntley has appeared on the Seniors Circuit before having qualified for the World Senior Darts Championship at the Circus Tavern back in February and will return to TV action, after claiming his maiden Open Series Event of the year.

Tom Lonsdale also claimed his first Open Series competition victory in what was the Final Event of 2023, after beating Luke

Littler 6-3 in the Final despite the Nuke including 4 180s and a first 9 dart average of 109.41.

The Englishman defeated Event 15 winner Michael Huntley 4-1 in the Last 32 with a 90.30 average before repeating the trick in the Last 16, beating Brett Claydon by the same scoreline.

Samantha Kirton and Lorraine Hyde claimed their first ADC Women's Championship Tours on Saturday in Bristol, with Samantha beating Deta Hedman 5-2 to win Event 9. Scottish international Lorraine defeated Kim Holden in a last leg decider in the Semi Finals, before claiming a 5-1 win against Joanne Oldershaw in the Final but misses out on a place at the Live Lounge, by just 5pts.

2 more maiden winners followed on the Sunday at Wellsway Sports Centre, with Angela Kirkwood clinching a last leg decider to defeat Event 9 winner Kirton 5-4 in the Final of Event 11. 60-year-old Welsh international Chris Savvery made it 3 wins across the weekend for Wales, after condemning Deta Hedman to her second Final defeat in 2 days.

The Heart of Darts though finishes 2nd in the Women's Championship Tour Final standings after winning 2 Events and achieving 2 Runner's Up positions. Kim Holden despite winning no competitions, finishes top of the Tour by a point with WDF Girls Champion Eleanor Cairns finishing 4th with 40pts.

All winners on the Winmau Open Series over the weekend claimed 128pts towards the ADC Rankings, whilst the Champions on the Women's Championship Tour all picked up 64pts.

Winmau Open Series Results

WINMAU OPEN SERIES

EVENT 13 FINAL

Luke Littler **6 - 3** Darren O'Neill

WINMAU OPEN SERIES EVENT 14 FINAL

Connor Hopkins **6 - 0** Kieran Harris

WINMAU OPEN SERIES EVENT 15 FINAL

Michael Huntley **6 - 4** Neil Meneer

WINMAU OPEN SERIES EVENT 16 FINAL

Tom Lonsdale **6 - 3** Luke Littler

LP Metal Detecting Women's Championship Tour

EVENT 9 FINAL

Samantha Kirton **5 - 2** Deta Hedman

EVENT 10 FINAL

Lorraine Hyde **5 - 1** Joanne Oldershaw

EVENT 11 FINAL

Angela Kirkwood **5 - 4** Samantha Kirton

EVENT 12 FINAL

Chris Savvery **5 - 4** Deta Hedman



LP Metal Detecting Women's Championship Tour Finals

QUARTER FINALS

Kim Holden (1) **vs** Samantha Kirton (8)
Eleanor Cairns (4) **vs** Rebecca Brouse (5)
Lisa Ashton (3) **vs** Angela Kirkwood (6)
Deta Hedman (2) **vs** Jody Hancock (7)

SEMI FINALS

Holden / Kirton **vs** Cairns / Brouse
Ashton / Kirkwood **vs** Hedman / Hancock

FINAL

Winner of SF1 **vs** Winner of SF2

JONNY CLAYTON TOUR POLO



NEW

**HARDCORE
GOLD KITE
FLIGHT**

F6722



NEW

TOUR POLO

- Stylish zipper and dragon scale design
- Made from 100% recycled polyester fibres
- Made from stretchy and breathable fabric

SIZES: M, L, XL, 2XL



SWITCH IT UP!

HOW A COACHING DRILL WENT MAINSTREAM

Words: CJ HARRIS-HULME
Images: WINMAU AND GO DARTS PRO

The art of 'positive switching', to hit higher scores rather than for a set up or blocked angle, was mastered by Dennis Priestley. In his first World title run The Mañace amazed viewers with his habitual clocking of treble 18. This ensured he was swiftly 'on a finish' in minimum darts and was soon raising the bar for overall averages.

One of my favourite coaching drills is called SwitchBlade. It's a very simple way to get your eyes, & body, used to switching away from its main target. Following Dennis players have developed switching to a fine art. Some such as Adrian Lewis and Michael Smith almost seem to prefer it.



*Let's get you more proficient,
and automated, at this:*

Game overview

SwitchBlade aims to improve your accuracy and fluidity when switching from one treble bed to another. This applies equally to switching due to vision blockage or to ensure leaving a finish.

As with many of AIM drills it is based around five turns at the board:

- Turn 1:** Aim for Treble 20 with all three darts.
- Turn 2:** Aim your first two darts at t20 then your third at t19
- Turn 3:** Aim your first two at t20 then the third at t18
- Turn 4:** Aim your first two at t20 and the third at t17
- Turn 5:** Aim your first two at t20 and third at the Bullseye

Example

1. t20, s20 ,t20 = 140
2. s20, t20, s19 = 99
3. t20, t20, t18 = 174
4. s20, s20, t3 = 49
5. t20, t5, Bull = 125
6. Total = 587

Variations

You can vary this drill in many ways, you can use 1 dart at the treble 20 and two at the others or insert a treble you use often from scores such as 180 or 191. Most often used are t13 or t14.

(N.B: The core skills are in the template above and that's the one we use most.)

Levels

SwitchBlade can be played by any player and doing it regularly will improve your overall play. Higher level players should really push themselves to get this to be second nature.

Level One: For those starting from a lower bar the first order of business is to hit the target aimed for so the 2 in the 20 segment and then one in the aimed for switch. If you manage this for each segment you will gain a score around 299.

Level Two: You should be aiming to hit one treble 20 or one on the switch. Scoring visits should total around 100 (+/- 10). Thus the total will be 450+

Level Three: You should now be looking to hit two trebles quite often. When you don't hit two you should still be hitting one. Scoring visits will be regularly 130+ and predominantly 91+. Scoring regularly over 550 will put you on a level with our best players.

Records

SwitchBlade requires rhythm and calm, a competitive streak also helps!

***The highest score, hit with marker/
witnessed, is 659.***

On this one, we shall keep the record hitter to ourselves. It was struck during a private prep session for a very big name a few years ago!

Going Mainstream

I often design them to help a specific player with a skill that may have faded or to add a better string to their bow. The majority of my coaching games and drills have remained between myself and the players they have been designed for, and used with, over the last dozen, or so, years.

However, partly due to the success of SwitchBlade, which was published after multiple requests, I have discussed publishing a suite of AIM coaching drills on Go Darts Pro in the near future.

So keep your eye out for: The Catherine Wheel, 50/50, 5 x 5, Pro Halve It, Propeller Heads and more.

Meanwhile enjoy **SwitchBlade** on **Go Darts Pro** and drop us a line to tell us how you're doing.

MVG – The Ultimate Equipment Evolution

FROM CUSTOMISED MYSTERY DART TO WINMAU EXACT

MICHAEL VANGERWEN

EXACT™ 21.5



WINMAU®
THE FORCE BEHIND DARTS™

While many PDC professional players seemingly change their equipment on a weekly basis (Peter Wright, I'm looking at you), one player in particular has become rather infamous – up until recently – with his adamant refusal to replace his match darts. I am, of course, referring to the former World Champion, Michael van Gerwen.

While the jury is out on what darts Michael was using in his reign of dominance, one thing is for certain – they had gone well past their sell-by

date! After careful research, I believe the darts used by MVG to win his three World Championships were a set of McKicks Mighty Grip.

According to internet rumours, MVG purchased his darts from a local darts shop back in 2006. The shop itself was owned by Bulls, which shared a factory with McKicks.

Michael's former sponsor XQMax only began their own darts production back in 2014, which rules out the possibility he ever used his own XQMax branded darts.

There is a possibility he used his own Masterdarts, but I was unable to find any evidence to back up that argument. I'll be taking a look at the darts associated with MVG in the past.

I have managed to acquire five of Michael's darts, including one rare set you may not have seen before! While they may be darts most commonly associated with the 'Green Machine', I will not be including the aforementioned McKicks Mighty Grip, as they are not strictly MVG branded darts.

▷ **Masterdarts Michael van Gerwen 21g**

The first darts produced for MVG courtesy of former sponsor Masterdarts, these darts feature the typical MVG style of grip, with two focused areas of coverage for consistent finger placement. As a player that relies on the 'feel' of the dart, the grip placement was of paramount importance.

Compared to the more recent MVG branded darts, the Masterdarts are rather short, at just 49mm. The barrels are thin too, at just 6.4mm thanks to the 90% tungsten billet used in production. The balance between width and length I found to be interesting when comparing the dimensions of the three available weights (21g, 23g and 25g), as it seems that rather than increasing the width for the greater weight, Masterdarts have instead substantially increased the length of the barrel by up to 4mm, as well as the width for the 25g weight.

The groves themselves are the thinnest of the five sets I own, which in turn offers a very high level of grip. Surprisingly, in terms of grip surface area, the Masterdarts offer the smallest area of grip out of the five, with the central separation area larger than all but the Winmau MVG Exact, of which it is equal to.



XQMax MVG Originals 21g

XQMax Originals are an instantly recognisable dart. Sharing a similar profile to his prior branded darts, XQMax made a few subtle changes – whether at Michael's request, or due to marketability, we may never know.

The groves, while very slightly thicker, offer the highest level of grip of all the sets I've tested. Despite feeling much thicker, the darts actually share identical dimensions to the Masterdarts I looked at previously. The barrel is slightly shorter, much like the central grip divider, which means that by pure surface area, the XQMax offer themselves to a greater range of players with a greater range of grip and throw styles.

The taper has been slightly changed too, with the XQMax adopting a bull-nose similar to that of James Wade's Unicorn darts. This means the barrels and flights are more susceptible to damage, and that grouping the darts closer will be slightly more difficult, unless you decide to swap out the points for something longer.



Winmau MVG Authentic 22g

The Winmau MVG Authentic's were the first 'match-designed' set of darts under new sponsor, Winmau. Used by MVG infrequently in both televised and floor tournaments across 2020, the Authentic's were the first dart that Michael viewed as a potential successor to his long-standing and, by now, well worn match-darts.

The darts feature thicker rings, with an atomised coating in-between the groves, helping to recreate the worn feel of Michael's former darts. Produced in 22g, 23g, 24g and 26g, Winmau took a step back from the usual 21g, 23g and 25g weights that Michael's darts have typically been produced in. The darts have also dropped to a lower grade of tungsten, now at just 85%.





Utilising a far more rounded taper, the darts glide past each other in the board, allowing for close-knit grouping. Winmau seems to have drawn more inspiration from Masterdarts than XQMax with the Authentics, as the darts share a similar profile, but for a slightly elongated rear section. The darts are 50.8mm in 22g, and so a near 2mm difference in length compared to previous designs.

Winmau MVG Exact 21.5g

Could these be 'the ones'? Has Winmau finally cracked the code and designed Michael his perfect dart? All the signs seem to point that way...

Released as part of their 2022 product launch, the MVG Exact's are, as you can guess, the EXACT darts the man himself uses in competition, in his EXACT weight of 21.5g. They are also available in 23g, 24g and 25g, as well as in 18g and 21.5g in soft tip.

The darts have been atomised, creating a worn feel, but with maximum grip – exactly as requested by MVG in order to propel him once again to the top of the world of darts.

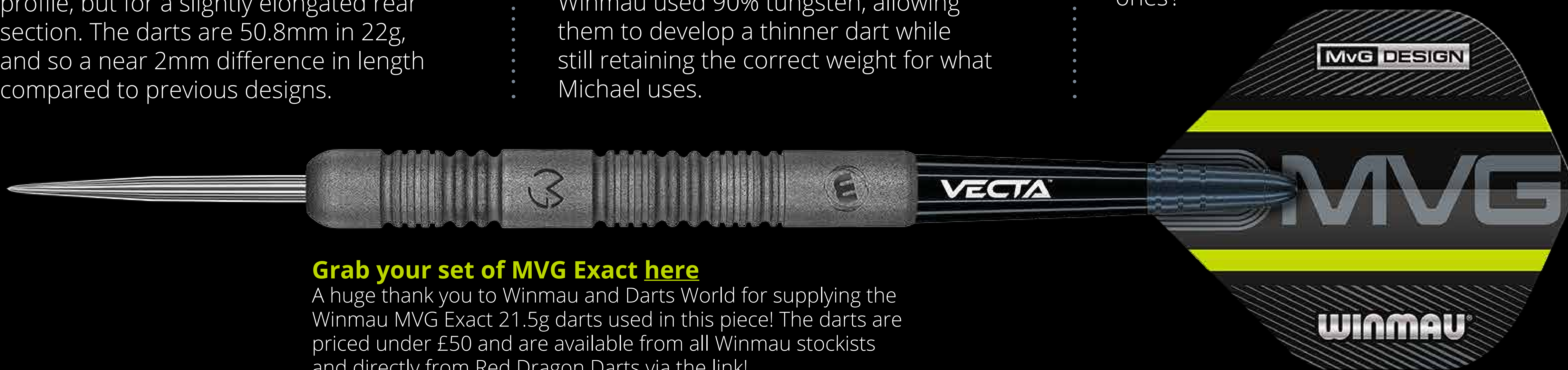
Both the thinnest, and longest released match-designed darts released under the van Gerwen name, the 21.5g version are 6.25mm wide, with a length of 53mm. Winmau used 90% tungsten, allowing them to develop a thinner dart while still retaining the correct weight for what Michael uses.

The additional length to the barrel has been added to the rear smooth section, which brings the balance slightly further back. This allows Michael's darts to sit slightly flatter in the board, as no major changes have been made to his setup, besides the switch of stems to the new Winmau Vecta shafts.

These, for me, are my favourite MVG darts to throw, and I highly recommend investing in a set if you've ever been a fan of any of the previously mentioned MVG darts. The darts sit comfortably in your hand, with the atomised coating ensuring the darts are hard wearing, and that the feel of the barrel remains consistent, time after time.

In answer to my question, "Could these be the ones"? Yes – I think they may just be!

Truly an iconic player, with a design of dart that has inspired many professional, and amateur players in their hunt for 'the ones'!



Grab your set of MVG Exact here

A huge thank you to Winmau and Darts World for supplying the Winmau MVG Exact 21.5g darts used in this piece! The darts are priced under £50 and are available from all Winmau stockists and directly from Red Dragon Darts via the link!

HER LATEST BEAU

GREAVES WINNING RUN CONTINUES

Words: JR LOTT & HARRY MASTERSON

Images: PDC



Beau Greaves increased her remarkable grip on the Womens Series, and their game in general, at the latest followed up her Women's World Matchplay victory with 4 straight Women's Series successes.

Events 13,14, 15 and 16 in Milton Keynes all fell to the teenage titan currently bossing the female game.

Beau 'n' Arrow defeated Mikuru Suzuki 7 days ago at the Winter Gardens and repeated the trick in both Finals on Sunday after wrapping up 5-0 and 5-4 wins over the former 2-time BDO World Champion.

However, The Doncaster thrower's most impressive display came in the Final of Event 14 on Saturday, defeating former Women's Matchplay champion Fallon Sherrock 5-1 with an average of 104.96.

The reigning WDF Ladies World Champion produced an early whitewash victory over Deta Hedman to kick start her four-day campaign, before producing her first ton plus average in beating Noa-Lynne van Leuven 4-2 in the Last 16.

Greaves went on to defeat former 4-time World Champion Lisa Ashton 5-2 in the Final, with the Lancashire Rose recently winning 4 events straight on the ADC Women's Championship Tour.

Beau continued to dominate proceedings in Milton Keynes on Sunday, opening her Event 15 campaign with consecutive ton plus averages (101.90 and 100.01) in beating Nanako Shimizu and Aileen de Graaf to reach the Last 16.

The 19-year-old defeated Robyn Byrne in a repeat of the recent Women's World Matchplay Quarter Final, with the score also finishing 5-3 in favour of Greaves in Milton Keynes.

The reigning Matchplay winner produced her third ton plus average of the event after beating Lisa Ashton 5-2 in the Semi Finals, averaging 100.86 with the Lancashire Rose averaging 96.71 herself in a high quality Last 4 clash.

Beau went on to whitewash Mikuru Suzuki - who must feel like the darting equivalent of Greaves' rabbit - 5-0 in the Final of Event 15, making it three wins from three at the Marshall Arena.



Greaves' best performance from the final competition of the weekend came against Irish youngster Katie Sheldon, claiming a whitewash win with an average just shy of 97. The 19-year-old went on to claim back-to-back Final victories over Suzuki, clinching a last leg decider on double 16 to strike perfection in Milton Keynes, winning all 4 events over the weekends action.

The 19-year-old sits atop of the Women's Series Order of Merit having earned £24,800, with Mikuru Suzuki in 2nd trailing by £13,400, having already secured her spot at the Grand Slam and PDC World Championship last week.

The PDC Women's Series returns in September for Events 17-20 from Robin Hill Sports Park in Wigan. Beau Greaves will remain the lady to beat as she again build a remarkable run of wins. Can Suzuki conquer the battle scars, can Fallon produce her best or will Paula Jacklin pull off another shock?

The betting will soon be on who will end her dominance and when?

PDC Women's Series Results

EVENT 13

SEMI FINALS

Beau Greaves **5 - 2** Aoife McCormack
 Lisa Ashton **5 - 1** Rhian O'Sullivan

FINAL

Beau Greaves **5 - 2** Lisa Ashton

EVENT 14

SEMI FINALS

Beau Greaves **5 - 1** Rhian O'Sullivan
 Fallon Sherrock **5 - 3** Lisa Ashton

FINAL

Beau Greaves **5 - 1** Fallon Sherrock

EVENT 15

SEMI FINALS

Mikuru Suzuki **5 - 3** Rhian O'Sullivan
 Beau Greaves **5 - 2** Lisa Ashton

FINAL

Beau Greaves **5 - 0** Mikuru Suzuki

EVENT 16

SEMI FINALS

Beau Greaves **5 - 3** Aileen de Graaf
 Mikuru Suzuki **5 - 0** Anastasia Dobromyslova

FINAL

Beau Greaves **5 - 4** Mikuru Suzuki

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BRAVE NEW WORLD?

GLOBAL DARTS THRIVES AS WDF EUROPE STUMBLES

Words: THOMAS BARTLEY

Images: ÖSTERREICHISCHER DARTS VERBAND



The WDF may be having teething troubles, since its post covid re birth in 2022, but it should be remembered that the organisation has truly global links and will gain support and playing staff as soon as the new timetable is properly established. A good example is this review of the last 6 weeks.

Haupai Puha was denied a fifth WDF title of the year at the New Zealand Masters, with Ben Robb getting the better of the world number 2.

Robb impressed in the Wellington tournament and came through the final 5-1, a win which avenges his prior defeat to Puha in the John Wilkie Memorial event.

Ben is himself at number 6 on the WDF rankings and will come in as a strong contender at the Lakeside in December.

The women's tournament was captured by Desi Mercer, who beat Nicole Regnaud 5-1.

Stateside, Alex Spellman was the victor in the Charlotte Open, conquering Dustin Holt 5-2 in the final.

It followed a semi-final scalp over Jason Brandon.

Favourite Leonard Gates had been dismissed at the last 16 stage, 4-3 to Bobby Sluder, with Larry Butler departing in the previous round.

The women's event was won by Andrea Taylor over Canadian Trish Grzesik, her first tour level win in 11 years.

July has also been a month for the WDF's junior talent, with the Europe Cup youth event taking place.

There were wins for England's boys in the main event and the pairs, with Archie Self and Thomas Banks (pairs winners) teaming up with Callum Beddow and Jenson Walker in the overall competition.

German Yorick Hofkens, aged 16, won the singles competition, defeating Banks 6-3 in the final.

As for the girls, Italy's rising star Aurora Fochesato won the individual event, retaining the gold she collected last year.

She defeated Turkey's Zehra Gemi in the final 5-2, which proved the only damp squib in an excellent weekend's play for Turkey's young women.

The nation won the overall and pairs

event, with Gemi partnering with Belinay Pelivan.

Elsewhere, the West Japan Cup resulted in a men's victory for Shingo Enomata and a women's win for Yukie Sagaguchi.

It was a maiden win for Enomata, who had previously lost out in the latter stages of a number of events in Japan and made an appearance in the last 32 of the 2017 World Masters.

Sagaguchi, also a former World Masters competitor, also took her first WDF crown. She had lost last year's final to Mikuru Suzuki.

In the New Zealand youth event, there were titles for Hunter Eyles and Aaliyah Taukamo-Pohio.

Eyles defeated Ihaka Kaio-Wynyard to win the youth whilst Taukamo-Pohio beat Fakamoaki Poiafati to win the girls' trophy.

There was some frustrating news on the event front with the Northern Ireland Darts Organisation announcing that their Open and Matchplay events would be canned.

The tournaments, billed for later this year, are set to return in 2024.



In addition to this, there was the larger news that the showpiece World Masters would not take place as planned.

The decision, made due to 'long-term planning' considerations, will come as a disappointment to players and fans.

The hope however remains that the tournament will return in 2024.

August kicked off with a visit to Belgium for the Antwerp and Belgium Opens.

World Master Wesley Plaisier got the better of in-form Matt Edgar in the Antwerp event, with Deta Hedman winning the women's event for the fifth time.

The Belgium Open tournaments were meanwhile captured by Francois Schweyen and Noa-Lynn van Leuven.

The Japan Open was won by Jun Matsuda (in the men's event) and Mayumi Ouchi (in the women's competition).

Also held this month was the prestigious Pacific Masters.

Lisa Ashton retained the women's title, defeating Lisa Clarke 5-1 in the final, whilst Raymond Smith won the men's win a 6-5 win over Andy Baetens.

Darting USA

American Media Make Matchplay Pilgrimage

Words: THOMAS BARTLEY
Player Image: PDC



FOR a few years various members of the DW team having been looking to developments across the pond. The CDC's success and the improvement in playing strength, and depth, indicated that, finally, North American Steel tip darts may be ready for a leap in profile and success.

Whilst covering the World Matchplay Thomas spotted another development in this rapid expansion:

So is Blackpool's status within the darts fraternity that people travel far and wide to attend the World Matchplay.

But few travelled further to this year's competition than Will Stuart and Jen Mounts of USA Darts, the media organisation aiming to shake up the sporting landscape stateside.

It is a company with bold aims but one which is quickly gaining credibility and respect within the American darts community.

"I had already been working for a company called A-Z Darts," Jen explained, as we spoke inside the Winter Gardens press centre.

"USA Darts had been founded by Kevin Malenfant and we had been working with him to stream events, so when he wanted to retire we decided to take over."

"We needed someone to broadcast things and Will had been doing quarantine darts," she continued. "I started to look for someone to take on this task, which is really a tall order given all the travel involved. He was the perfect fit."

Tall order perhaps doesn't quite cut it, with the job taking Will across a wide array of postings across the United States. This year alone has seen him spend in excess of 100 days in hotels.

"I didn't have any real technical background but I was able to learn it as I



went," Will detailed. "I had been following darts since about 2017, and when Covid came, I saw the opportunity to provide extra streaming."

"We started off with a few tournaments and now we have 15 a year. It can be very demanding, especially when you are going to places like Las Vegas for an 8 to 10 day stint."

The extent of USA Darts's commitments are now becoming extensive and the needs for more staff greater and greater. But the unwavering ambition to service American darts has become only stronger, as Jen outlined.

"Darts is really quite huge in the United States, it just hasn't been marketed properly yet. When you have an existing body like the PDC which is in cooperation with us, that is really exciting."

"We are really here because we want the US audience to care about the PDC and European fans to care about American darts. It's really a twofold ambition."

Over the course of our conversation, and my time in their company over the three days we shared

in Blackpool, it becomes clear that Jen and Will are very able and intelligent people.

Even the grander questions, such as asking them how they would reformulate the calendar or deploy an unlimited source of resources if offered, are answered clearly and convincingly.

"We have really thought a lot about this to the granular detail," Mounts suggested. "There needs to be a careful selection of times and dates for tournaments and we need to be conscientious about that."

It is clear there are obstacles. Soft tip comes up (though Jen and Will are keen to include it and are conscious of its financial advantages for US players), as do restrictive laws on gambling stateside.

Another unavoidable issue is the saturation of sport in the United States. Again, though, the pair have a plan.

Jen said: *"We have tried to work with a lot of the existing sports networks which cover niche sports to try to grow this exposure. It is really about working hard to immerse people in the lifestyle of darts and the flow of leagues and tournaments."*

The mountain to climb for American darts is certainly a large one, but it is exciting to see people with the vision to conquer it. Watch this space.



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Warner Wins University Challenge

Sheffield Alumni Shines at UDUK Inaugural Event

Words: THOMAS BARTLEY
Images: MODUS AND UDUK

Players brace for Friday's Summer Showdown in Rotherham

PDC Tour Card holder Adam Warner won July's first ever UDUK Summer Showdown with a dominant overall display.

Warner, a Sheffield graduate who joined the PDC in January, defeated Hallam's James Buckby 3-0 in the final.

The 26-year-old's appearance in the event, which included not just current but former university students, was a major coup.

And he was always going to be hard to stop in a field which included well over sixty competitors.

Buckby had overcome Morgan Shillito (also of Hallam) 3-1 in the semi-final, whilst Warner had defeated Ollie Burgess.

Warner was nearly scalped at the last 16 stage by strong Scottish prospect Aidan Sutherland, one of many players in the field to

have played at a top amateur level.

For those who did not make it out of the group stage, there was also a consolation competition.

It was won by Manchester's John Lynch, who got the better of Notts alumni Adam Best by two legs to one in the final.

The event began shortly after 6pm on Friday evening at Rotherham's Magna Centre (pictured), which is also playing host to the UKDA National Finals this weekend.

Proceedings were finely compered by Simon Rimmington, with marking duties shared amongst players.

UDUK Vice President Iwan Hughes said of the Showdown, "It was great to see University players coming together, especially outside of term time, to collaborate in ensuring a great event was held."

"Congratulations to Adam Warner, Aidan Sutherland, and James Buckby who excelled in the averages throughout."

He continued: "Mostly, a thanks goes to UKDA, Simon Rimmington and Colin Savage for allowing us to host this event. It provides a great platform for continued UDUK development into the 23/24 Academic Year."

The tournament closes the curtain on a stellar 2022/23 UDUK campaign, which began with events in Liverpool and Scotland as well as the beginnings of the league season in October.

Attention will now turn to UDUK and society preparations for the next academic year, as clubs gear to recruit new players and members.

We wish all our universities the best in this endeavour and look forward to more fantastic events next year.

Time Off For World Cup Duty

Youngster Denied
Time Off US Team Duty

Words: STEVE BROWN

Since last time, the main activity over here was the National Finals for the WDF World Masters, and this was held in Charlotte, NC, last month. With the Masters being cancelled for this year, the players qualifying for the 2024 staging are, Liz Tynan, Cali West, Dustin Holt, Kevin Luke, David Fatum, and Jason Brandon. So, plenty of experience there!

The same weekend, we had the ADO National Youth Championship, with the winners also advancing to the 2024 World Masters. P.J. Stewart won his fourth successive Boys' title, but due to his age, he will be competing in the Men's event. Alexis Achgill is the new Girls' champion.

I'll be honest, the World Masters being cancelled for 2023, it really did us a favour here in the US, as it would have been a massive expense finding the funds to send players to the Masters AND the World Cup in a short space of time. So, sticking with the World Cup, we have finally been able to name our team for Esbjerg. It is Marlise Kiel, Carolyn Mars, Paula Murphy, Cali West, Joe Chaney, Danny Lauby Jr, Robbie Phillips, and Bruce Robbins. The Youth Team will be Kellie-May Buzzell, Cyndi Kelley, Kaden Anderson, and Seth Patenaude. The sad news is that P.J. Stewart was on the Youth Team, but he wasn't allowed the timed off school to compete.

Back to Charlotte, and the WDF-ranked Charlotte Open brought first-time WDF wins for two players! Oklahoma's Andrea Taylor has only returned to competition this year after a several year hiatus, and

she beat out Canadian Trish Grzesik for the title. In the Men's, meanwhile, Alex Spellman continued his excellent form of recent months with a superb win over Dustin Holt. Losing semi-finalists were Sandy Hudson and Tracy Feiertag (women), and Jason Brandon and J.T. Davis (men).

Spellman captured the double with another fine victory against Patrick Kithi in the cricket singles, while the evergreen Paula Murphy took the Women's title back to Florida with a win over Julie Weger.

David Kramer won the Boys' singles from Colin Finnegan, while Alexis Achgill picked up here second win of the weekend against Ariel Geary. It is very disappointing that, since the Covi pandemic, we have really struggled to get the youth players out, even for our National Championships. I just don't know what the answer is...

The WDF-ranked Oregon Open in June brought wins for Kevin Luke (against

Canadian Rory Hansen), while Boston's Sally Kelly made the long trip across country worthwhile by edging out local favourite Carole Herriott in the Women's. There was also a WDF Youth event at the Cherry Bomb International down in Florida, with Ryan Avellino and Alexis Achgill being the big winners.

It's been a pretty quiet summer over here in general, with the Charlotte Open and Oregon Open being the only WDF-ranked tournaments, and in fact, we only have one ADO-sanctioned tournament in August, the Top of Texas Open in Amarillo. We should have had our US Team Nationals in September, at the Witch City Open, but with the 2024 Americas Cup in doubt, there didn't seem much point in qualifying players for a tournament that may not even be held! Still, the World Cup will provide plenty of action next month, with the biggest turnout ever.

THE Checkout

Since taking custody of Darts World Magazine, during the covid pandemic, the team has slowly been creating a new model of sustainable darts media.

We refused to simply ditch the print magazine and instead have changed the size, weight and frequency. This has seen us double the print run over the last two years and we hope to do so again in even quicker time.

Expanding our online presence, including newsletters and social media, has ensured we are a voice heard across the darting community at every important moment and not just when the print presses run.

The addition of new products including Darts World Extra has seen us reach a whole new audience with issues receiving tens of thousands of visits at either our platform or via our kind hosts at Red Dragon Darts.

DW 584 will be released this autumn and will contain extended interviews, features cartoons and competitions.

Visit our anniversary website at dartsworld50.com where you can also sign up for our weekly newsletter: **Darts World Digest**. Don't forget the **DW shop** for the latest products, subscriptions and offers.

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