



CHECK THIS OUT!

By Steve Brown

Steve Brown has become a familiar face on the American darts tour, as well as worldwide. At the top of his list, he is a two-time winner of the Nodor North American Open singles and a Lucky Lights Challenge of Champions titlist. He was ranked World No. 3 in 1989 and has had several wins across the board. In

1990, Brown finished at No. 7 on the U.S. money tour, having pocketed over \$15,000 in winnings. He was the highest placed non-American player listed.

Brown, formerly of Surrey, England, is now based in Holland. His tour schedule has him back in the States for the summer.

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Some of you out there will know the old saying, “Treat every day as your last, and one day you’ll be right.” Well, my darts philosophy is a variation on that. “Treat every *shot* as your last. ...” That’s what this series is all about.

Just as there are strategies in cricket, there are strategies in ‘01—particularly when it comes to finishing. Obviously, the top boys know their outs and how to set them up, but there are many, *many* players that struggle in this department.

Darters worldwide look up to the British as the best in the game. We *are* good, but I believe that ability-wise there is little difference between the Brits, Americans, Canadians, or anyone else for that matter. It comes down to two things: *experience* and *playing the correct shots*.

In recent years, a whole new way of thinking on outshot setups has evolved in the U.K. Instead of starting to count when you reach 150 or so, the brain

should be activated closer to 300.

Okay, I can hear you guys saying, “Hey, I’m only a league shooter. This doesn’t apply to me!” Sure it does. You’re exactly the kind of player this is aimed at.

The objective here is to give you more opportunities to win a game. The more opportunities you have, the more you are going to win. It’s a simple concept, actually.

Over the next few months, I’ll be discussing ways to leave a finish, particular combinations to leave a better finish, and the outs themselves. Naturally, it’s impossible to go into every option of every shot, but the large majority of one, two and three dart options will be discussed. If you have any questions or ideas, I’ll be pleased to hear from you. [Write to Steve in care of *Bull’s-Eye News* and save the overseas postage!—Ed.]

First, there are a few points which you need to remember:

Don't worry if people say you are trying to make your opponent look small. You're not.

Don't worry when you're sitting on tops and the enemy finishes 92 with sbull, s17, dbull! Take it as a compliment.

Don't worry about throwing at one of your least favorite doubles—they're all the same size.

Don't be afraid to follow your instincts.

Don't, however, let your instincts force you into reckless shots.

Outshots can be divided into three categories:

- a) *must* shots;
- b) *advisable* shots;
- c) *let's give it a thought* shots.

All of these apply when your opponent is on a double, or any finishable number (remember, *treat every shot* ...).

To illustrate, I'll recall for you the Keith Deller-Eric Bristow final of the 1983 World Championship. The match was tied at 5—all, and Deller was up 2-1 in the final set (a 3-1 score would win the match). Bristow was looking at 121, Deller 138. Bristow shoots s20, t17 and now has 50 left with one dart to throw. Now, perhaps Bristow was thinking, "Keith's back on 138—I should get another throw!" Bristow tossed s18 to leave d16.

Deller stepped up and three darts later—namely t20, t18, d12—it was all over.

Let's look at some other examples.

Back at the Budweiser Easy Money Open, Chad Sylvan and I had reached the top eight of the '01 doubles. We're on a double and Jim Coakley (a great player, incidentally) stood on the oche facing 90. First dart for t18 missed and went fat. Second dart for t12 also went fat. Single 20 set up d20 for their next handful, but there *was no* next handful.

The shot should have been s20, s20, dbull. Just a simple single, single, double. No triple required, but a t20 first arrow gives you two shots at d15. It matters not that you love d18 ... if you don't have a dart at it. Make sure you give yourself a dart at a double—and hopefully, it will be the only one you need.

There's a happy ending to that tale. The following week at the Lucky Strike Filters Blueberry Hill Open, Coakley got his revenge on yours truly. It was 2-zip in the top four of the singles. Nice one, Jim!

Now to the second example—the semi-final of the 1990 Swiss Open. I was up against another top Brit, Paul Reynolds, and he was nicely poised to take the first leg. It was my shot. Needing 132, I threw dbull, dbull, d16, thank you very much.

I figured that Reynolds wouldn't give me another turn, so to play the percentages, the first dart must be at the cork. Double bull leaves 82, and if there is enough room, it makes sense to stay there. If you only pick off a single first dart, 107 is still possible with two darts. Anywhere else on the board with your first one and you need two triples and a double, instead of single, triple, double.

Finally, a midgame situation. You've shot two darts, and you're now sitting on 188. Triple 20 is fine, but s20—yuk! A 168 requires more than three darts to finish. Switch to 18s, and the triple works, but a single still leaves a finish. I hear you again, "You don't expect me to take out 170." Maybe not, but you've got a dam sight more chance on 170 than on 168!

I went through this with a guy who reckoned he had more chance of hitting t20 with his last dart (and 128 out), than checking the 170. Looking a turn further, a player thinking that probably wouldn't choose the correct shot for 128 (s18, t20, dbull—more details in a later issue), assuming he found t20.

Therefore, he would need *four* perfect darts (t20, t20, t20, d4), whereas a s18 means that only *three* darts out of the four need be perfect (s18, t20, t20, dbull). Think about it.

Next issue we'll look at shot options on some of the lower checkouts.

