



# CHECK THIS OUT!

By Steve Brown



## Alternative Selections

**T**he most important finishes are those of 60 and below. They are the ones that are left most frequently, and fouled up most frequently. Of course, fat singles should pose no problem, but we all know how "unlucky" they can be, especially under pressure.

You can reduce your pressure by allowing room for error (i.e. fatter areas).

As far as percentages, some of these shots may seem contradictory. For instance, I advise you to shoot single 9 with 17 left (although the triple will bust, but not with 25 left).

Without wishing to sound too scientific, every player's throw has its own characteristics. Every darter has their own style and action, and consequently, every dart reacts differently. It can help if you know exactly how your dart behaves.

Most players have a tendency to "push" the dart when aiming at a fat single at the top of the board, which often results in the dart slipping sideways into the next segment. Therefore, a single 9 *can* seem easier than a single 1 (on certain shots). That may sound confusing, so I'll try to clarify that with statistics (and you can try this at home if you like). Take 100 shots at 17, looking at the single 1, and 100 looking at single 9. You will probably find that you bust more going for the single 1. Likewise, try that

routine with 25 left, shooting at single 9 and single 5. See what happens.

The main points to remember here are: a) work on percentages, and b) don't go where you can bust (if you can avoid it).

By the way, the fact that I prefer tops to d16 is totally irrelevant here.

Obviously, it's up to the individual to decide which shot feels most comfortable. We are inclined to shoot the way we were taught—like t16, d20 is the *only* way for 88—but without necessarily condemning these as the *wrong* shots, there is nothing wrong with searching out alternatives.

Particularly with the lower finishes, I am just providing a list of alternatives, percentage alternatives, and I believe in many cases, *better* alternatives.

**We start then, at five.** *Never* be afraid of s3, d1, instead of s1, d2. Double 2 can be awfully intimidating at this stage, and more often than not, the second dart will land in the s2, forcing you to switch again. Single 3 gives you two darts at the same double.

Skipping past a few numbers (the obvious ones), we arrive at ...

**Fifteen.** Single 7, d4 or s3, d6 can be risky, with biggies either side of the single. Try s11, d2, or s13, d1. A s4, s13, or s6 doesn't hurt too bad, and you can pull the dart for s11 down into the 8 and leave a shot.

**Seventeen.** I don't understand why

so many darters find s1, d8 the best way. With 20s one side and 18s the other, you're asking for it. So, s9, d4, or even s13, d2. If you stay clear of the 20, s5, d6 will work. Triple 5 doesn't bust.

**Nineteen.** Most decide on s3, d8, but occasionally find s19 (bust), or s17 (to leave d1). Again, don't be too concerned about leaving d1, but you may feel more comfortable with s11, d4, or possibly s13, d2.

**Twenty-one.** The same as 17, the 20 bed can be a bit close for comfort. How about s13, d4.

We'll skip 23 (plenty of alternatives on the 7-19-3-17 area), and come straight to my personal favorite ...

**Twenty-five.** If you fancy s17, d4, you must avoid both the double (34) and triple (51). If you shoot for s9, the triple will bust you. That's why I always go for s5, d10. Triple 5 still leaves a double (and there's nothing wrong with d5).

**Twenty-seven.** Perhaps s11, d8, or one down the bottom at 7-19-3.

**Twenty-nine.** Slightly unconventional, but s9, d10—the triple does no real damage.

**Thirty-one.** Fifteen is the obvious dart, but as with 27, 7-19-3 is a possibility. I'd look at s11, d10, which is slightly preferential to s15, d8 as a double (22) does not bust.

**Forty-one.** Single 1, s5, or s9. For the novice, the bottom of the board

(between 7 and 17) would be fine.

**Forty-three.** Triple 19 may seem a problem, but you can drift either side of the single (s7, d18 or s3, d20) and leave a double. There is always s11, d16.

**Forty-five.** Plenty of alternatives here. Single 13, s5, or s9.

**Forty-seven.** Not critical either. You can go s15, d16, s11, d18, or 27, d20. Once more, the seven gives the added luxury of wandering next door (19) and still having a dart to chuck at a double.

**Forty-eight.** Obvious really, on 8s or 16s, but spare a thought for s12, d18.

**Forty-nine.** Single 13 (leaving d18) or s9 (leaving d20) should get the nod over s17, d16. Either way, if you hit the triple (t13, d5 or t9, d11), it's still no problem. It's the same with ...

**Fifty.** How many times have you picked t18 instead of the single? More times than you care to remember, no doubt. Therefore s10, d20, or s14, d18.

**Fifty-one.** Single 19, d16 can cause problems, so s11, d20, or s15, d18.

**Fifty-two.** Single 12, d20 is better

than s20, d16, but s16, d18 is worth a try.

**Fifty-three.** Single 17, d18 and no real harm from the triple. A slip over to three still leave d25. Single 13, d20 can also work.

**Fifty-four.** This can be an awkward one. Eighteens can be risky, but with only two darts in your hand, it's a good shot. Pull down into the four and you've got a dart at the cork.

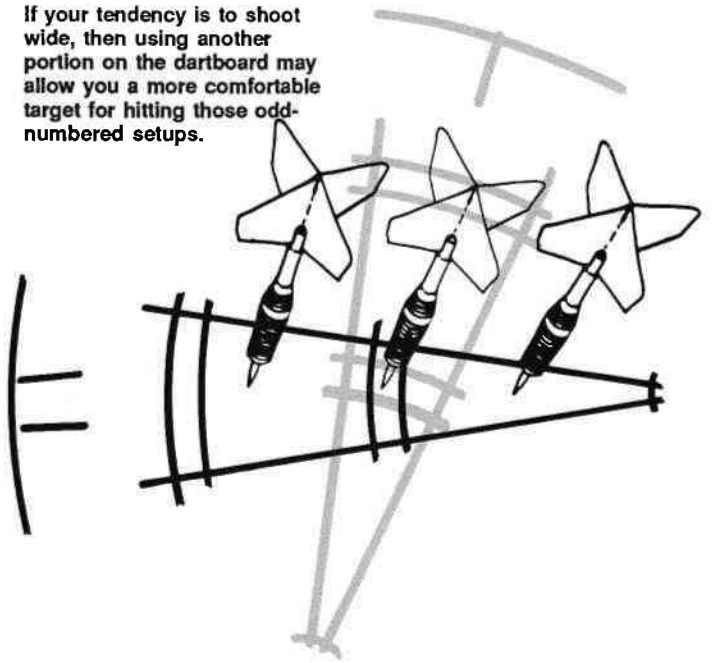
Normally, though, s14 would be the target for your first dart.

**Fifty-five.** Single 15, d20 just edges out s19, d18, purely because of the bust possibility.

**Fifty-six.** Same here. Single 16, d20 is ahead of s20, d16.

**Fifty-seven.** This is pretty clearcut with s17, d20, although there are a few

If your tendency is to shoot wide, then using another portion on the dartboard may allow you a more comfortable target for hitting these odd-numbered setups.



players that have a liking for bull, d16. That's okay, but dbull leaves you a nasty little seven.

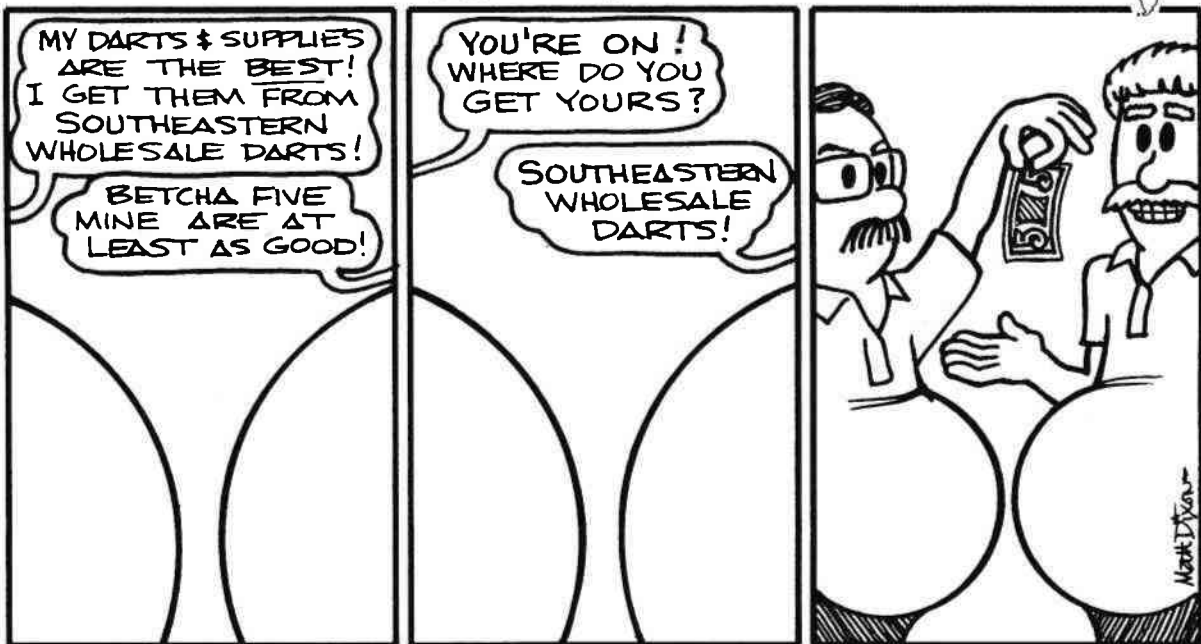
**Fifty-eight and fifty-nine.** These are obvious as is ...

**Sixty.** I know you *shouldn't* go where you can bust, but 60 is the one finish with no suitable alternative.

That's it for this issue. Next time we'll run through some tricky numbers in the 60s, 70s and 80s. Shoot well.



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