From the Originator of Electronic Darts

Arachnid Tech. Tips

A Publication Especially for Operators and Technicians who service Arachnid Products

FALL 1994

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This publication is provided as an aid for field technicians and operators who troubleshoot, repair, and maintain Arachnid games. It is a technical tool designed to keep all the latest updates, service bulletins, suggestions, and ideas together in one neat package.

Your input is welcome. If you have a special idea or tip you would like to share, send it to: It will be reviewed and considered for publication.

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HAVE A TECHNICAL QUESTION OR PROBLEM? Call us at 1-800-435-8319 and ask for Technical Service. We'll be happy to assist you in any way we can.

IN THIS ISSUE:

Fall Leagues are Beginning 1
The Spider Writer Screen Contest 1
Preparing Dartman II for the Fall 2
Technical BBS: Final Lesson 3
VGD Corner: Flush Fever! 3
The Archives: Tips for All Models 4

LET THE FALL LEAGUES BEGIN... A new Dart Season is Upon us

Its that time again, the time when weather turns colder, and people move indoors to sharpen their skills in the sport of darts. League activity around the country is at an all-time high, as dart playing reaches more and more people, from all walks of life. In addition to the common pub and lounge settings, dart games are appearing in bowling alleys, youth centers, clubs, and lodges. There are leagues for blind persons and other physically impaired people. Darts is a type of sport that can be enjoyed by almost everyone, regardless of age or physical ability. Good promotion and league support can create a successful dart business almost anywhere.

In an effort to appropriately rank players, a decision was made at the meeting of the National Dart Association (NDA) held in August of this year to phase out the Cricket S.P.R.E. (Spot Player Ranking Evaluation) system in favor of Marks Per Round averaging (**Note: This is for Cricket ONLY**). S.P.R.E. ranking for X01 games will remain unchanged and continue to be used. The existing Dartman II program (Version 1.084) and the League Master system already calculates marks per round, and can sort by it for reports, which makes the NDA change easy for our users.

Keep this change in mind when preparing for fall leagues, and have a successful league season!

The Spider Writer Screen Contest is Under Way!

In the summer issue of Tech Tips, the Spider Writer Screen Contest was announced. This contest gives the artist in you a chance to be recognized! The winner will receive a Dart King home electronic dart game, and the best entries will be published in the Winter issue of Tech Tips.

The Spider Writer feature was designed to be used by operators as a promotional tool for the sport of darts and for league and tournament advertisements, and many have come up with clever ways to accomplish this. The contest provides you with a chance to share these ideas, and win a prize for your efforts!

Send us your most clever and/or artistic screens - they will be judged **as they appear on a Galaxy dart game monitor**, for originality, creativity, and practical application.

How to Enter

There are two ways you can send your screens to us. You can either save the file on a 3 1/2" or 5 1/4" diskette, and send it by mail to the address listed at the top of this page, or you can upload the file to the Arachnid Bulletin Board System.

Please refer to the Tech Tips Summer '94 issue for additional information. If you did not receive one, or have any questions, call Arachnid and speak with the Tech Tips editor. Connie Groves, or the BBS Sysop, Mark Helmer. New deadline for sending entries is November 20, 1994. GOOD LUCK, and GOOD PROMOTING!

Contest Rules

This contest is open to all persons, except Arachnid, Inc. or TBI Games employees or affiliates, and their family members. All entries become the property of Arachnid, Inc. They may be made available to the general public, or used for advertising and/or promotional purposes. Entries must be in good taste to be considered. Entries will not be returned. Deadline for entries is November 20, 1994. Winner will be published in the Winter 1994 issue of Tech Tips.

Preparing Dartman II and your Computer for the Flood of new League Information

Preparing for new fall leagues is a task that can appear to be overwhelming, especially if you run many leagues. Dartman II has some built-in tools which are designed to make this preparation easier to accomplish.

Below is an outline for you to follow or modify to your specific needs. You may choose to skip or add steps as necessary:

Make Backups of Old Data Files - If you wish to keep records of the previous season, run the Dartman II backup of all your old data files. Also, if you have paper copies of final stats for the old leagues, it is a good idea to save these as well. Put the backups and any other information together, mark them accordingly, and store them in a safe place. They may become a handy reference for the new season.

Decide on League Names for this Season - You can use the same names as before, or give the leagues all new names. If you choose to leave names the same, and the locations and teams are also going to be the same or similar, then you can simply clear all old stats for those leagues out of Dartman II, and then make structural modifications. This will save time in entering locations, teams, and players over again.

Reset Stats for Leagues being Reused - Select the league you wish to reuse, and go to RESET STATS in the LEAGUES menu. You will see a box which has three choices; "Duplicates Only", "Team Stats", and "Player Stats". Place an X beside Team Stats and Player Stats, leaving Duplicates Only blank. This will clear all stats from the team and player files for this league, but the league structure will remain the same. It will wipe the slate clean, so to speak.

Restructure the League - Now go to MODIFY in the LEAGUES menu. Make any changes necessary here for running the new fall schedule, i.e change the number of teams, weeks, times, etc. as needed.

Add, Delete, or Modify Locations - If there are any additional locations, or if there are fewer locations than last season, add or delete them as necessary for this league. If a location has more or fewer dart games, or if the phone number has changed, also make those changes now.

Add, Delete, or Modify Teams - Similarly, if there are new teams to add or teams to delete from last season, make these changes also.

Add, Delete, or Modify Players - When a team is deleted, the players can also be deleted at the same time. However, if a team has retained some of its players, but not all, then you'll have to add or delete specific players to make the team roster correct. Of course, if there are any additional teams added to the league from last season, those players will also have to be added.

Check the new League Roster in Browse Mode - Go to BROWSE TEAM STATS, and check the team list for the restructured league. Next go to BROWSE PLAYER STATS, and check that all players are assigned to the correct teams.

Initialize the New Schedule - When you initialize the new schedule, Dartman II will say that a schedule has already been created for this league. This is the old season's schedule, disregard the message, and continue with the new one. Set the match dates, print it, and you're all set!

Add New League Names - If you need to set up any brand new leagues, go to LEAGUES, ADD. Add the league information, locations, teams, and players as prompted by Dartman II.

Rename Leagues when Possible - If you need to give a league a new name, but it is basically the same as a previous league, you can go to LEAGUES, RENAME. Remember, the old league is already backed up, so you have a record if ever needed. If you can rename an existing league, it may save you time in entering the locations and teams. After renaming, follow the previous procedure for resetting stats and restructuring the league.

Delete any Old, Unused Leagues - This is especially important if you use automatic modem collection. Any old leagues and their attached locations will show up as active on your phone list. Since you regenerate the phone list each week, you don't want to have to clean it up each time. Do your cleanup by deleting all leagues and locations that are not being used. Also, keeping only current leagues will free up computer space, and will lesson the chances of selecting the wrong league when you need to look at stats or print reports. **Tip For Auto Phone List Users - If there is an error in a phone number on the phone list, fix it under *LOCATIONS*, MODIFY. This way, the number will always come up correctly thereafter.**

Keep Information Correct Throughout the Season - Always check stats in the BROWSE modes before printing reports. If a name was entered as a substitute, and it was spelled incorrectly, you can change it before printing reports. Likewise, if there are any other discrepencies, they can also be changed ahead of time.

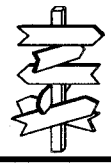
Removing Duplicate Stats - If a recollect is necessary due to a problem with an initial collection, you may get more stats than you need. If they are not deleted before they are loaded into the leagues, duplicate stats may result. Also, if you have to enter any stats manually, and a mistake is made, it may show up on reports as extra or incorrect stats. There are two ways to remove these stats:

Removing Extra Stats in Browse Mode - This is the preferred method for removing extra stats, as it is easy to see exactly what is being deleted. Enter the BROWSE mode, and then the player or team list comes up, press <F5>. This will allow you to see the individual weekly stats. Answer "Yes" to the question "Display Multiple Rows of Stats?" If there are extra stats showing for a given week, they can be deleted here by highlighting the line to be deleted, and pressing <F10>. The program will "mark" the line with a dot. When you are sure you have all the lines to be deleted marked accordingly, then you must back completely out of the BROWSE mode. When you go back in, you will see that the lines marked will be gone, and your totals should now be correct. **NOTE: This must be done for Team stats as well as Player stats, in most cases.**

Using RESET STATS to Remove Duplicates - This is another method for removing duplicate stats, but it should be used cautiously. If the league to be cleaned up is a combo league that plays more than one set of the same game type per night, then there is a possibility that two sets of stats may look identical for a given league match (example: a league that plays 3 games of 301, 3 games of cricket, 3 games of 301, and 3 more games of cricket). **DO NOT use this tool if you run this type of combo leagues!** Call Arachnid if you are not sure about how it may affect your stats.

From the LEAGUES menu, go to RESET STATS. Place an X next to all three choices ("Duplicates Only", "Team Stats", and "Player Stats"). This will cause Dartman II to look through the selected league, and remove any duplicate stats that it finds, while leaving the rest of the stats untouched.

Technical BBS: Final Lesson - Other Main Menu Options: BBS tools are at your Disposal



This is the final lesson in a series designed to teach novice Bulletin Board users how to access and use the Arachnid Technical Bulletin Board System (BBS). The BBS phone number is 1-815-654-7985.

Lesson two went through the Message Menu and Files Menu. We discussed leaving messages, uploading and downloading files, and other options available in these menus. Now we will discuss the remaining options of the Main Menu, and their usefulness to you as a user.

You will find the topics listed below within the Main Menu. The bold letters in the titles indicate the "hot" keys, or keys to activate the function listed:

Comments - You can write a comment (or message) and save it for the Sysop to read.

Your Settings - This shows your user level, the number of calls that you've made, your screen configurations, your number of uploads and downloads, and when your first login was made.

System Stats - Displays general BBS information, such as number of users, number of calls made to the BBS, current time, etc.

Newsletter - Displays new or current information about Arachnid's products.

Who's Online - The BBS is not set up for multi-users at this time, so this option is not available.

User List - This shows a list of all active BBS users; you can use this list as an E-mail directory for leaving messages to other users if you like.

Page Sysop - If the Sysop is available, he will answer your page, and you will be able to type with him in chat mode. If the Sysop is not available, you may leave a comment instead. The Page Sysop function will automatically go into the comment area so that you may do so.

Verify User - Use this to find a specific user instead of going through the entire user list.

Doors - Not available at this time.

Questionnaire - Questions you may answer if you desire to do so.

Talk to Nodes - Not available at this time.

? Command Help - Quick reference to BBS functions (letter commands and what they do).

Feel free to explore all available functions of our BBS at your leisure. We hope you have found the lesson articles helpful in getting started. Remember, if you have any questions or comments, you can call Arachnid, Inc. and speak with the BBS Sysop, Mark Helmer. He will be happy to help you and answer any questions you may have.

This concludes our BBS lesson series. We will keep you informed of any changes, additions, or updates to the BBS in later issues as they occur.

VGD Corner: Service Information and Tips...for Arachnid's Video Gaming Device

Introducing Flush Fever!

Flush Fever is a new twist for 5 Card Draw Poker on the Lucky Touch Video Gaming Device by Arachnid. The game is played with a 52 card deck. When Flush Fever is selected, and you hit a flush, a fever round starts and continues for the next five hands.

During a fever round:

» The player is awarded the amount of the bet for each card of the final hand that matches the suit of the flush that started the fever round.

» The bet is limited to the bet of the flush hand that started the fever round.

» Additional flush hands obtained within a fever round does not restart or extend the fever round or alter the original fever suit.

» Fever credits awarded are placed in a fever pool which is transferred to the normal credit pool at the end of the fever round.

» The player can collect his fever pool at any time by touching the fever pool button.

» A player can switch games and then return to flush fever to continue the fever round.

» If the player runs out of credits he can continue the fever round by inserting additional money or by collecting the fever pool.

» The credits awarded are limited to 2000 per hand.

Flush Fever is now avalaible for all Lucky Touch games within Louisiana. If you already have a Lucky Touch game, you should have received the latest software containing Flush Fever. If you haven't received yours, call Arachnid, Inc., and we will get you updated.

The Gators are Coming...Look Out!!!

Give your VGD a new"biting" attraction...Gator Glass! Designed especially for Louisiana, this new top and belly glass is sure to attract attention. New games may be ordered with the Gator Glass or you may order it to replace your existing glass.

Arachnid is always looking for new design ideas. If you have an idea for a different glass design, please share it with us.

A new Face on the Horizon...

Arachnid, Inc. would like to extend a warm welcome to a new member of our team, Todd Martin. Todd has joined us as our new representative for the Gaming Division. He will be traveling throughout Louisiana and other areas, promoting, selling, and supporting the Lucky Touch VGD.

Todd has 15 years experience in the Coin Op industry, and we feel he will be an asset to our company. Welcome aboard, Todd!

The Archives: Service Information, Past and Present... for Galaxies and Older Dart Game Models

Be Prepared for Fall...Give your Games (especially dartheads) a "Tune Up"

With fall leagues starting, dart games should be beginning to see an increase in use. If you can get a jump on routine calls with a little preventive maintenance, you should be able to rest easier on those league nights.

The Darthead and missed dart detector should be cleaned and adjusted, and all board connections should also be checked. The following checklist will help you prepare for the new season:

CLEAN THE DARTHEAD - First remove any broken tips from the darthead that can be pulled from the front. Next, remove the darthead, and pull any remaining tips from the back - pop off the segment back(s), and pull out the tips. Check the darthead for any "sticky" segments caused from dirt or other buildups. If necessary, the plastic segments or spider can be cleaned with a mild soapy solution, such as dishwashing liquid and water. (The switch matrix and cushion could also be gently washed with the same solution, if necessary.) Dry any washed parts thoroughly. Make sure there isn't any foreign material such as tip fragments or flashing between any of the darthead layers. Also, make sure the matrix cushion is in good condition, and lined up properly. Reassemble carefully, and place back into the game. **Remember, tighten the darthead nuts and mounting nuts FINGER TIGHT ONLY.**

DARTHEAD FIT - Make sure the darthead doesn't bind anywhere around the opening in the black web. Use a scraper or file on the opening to free up any areas of binding. After the darthead is installed, check the segments, especially the outer ones for free operation. Use a dart to check the bullseye - stick the dart into an outer hole, and spin the bullseye, it should spin freely. If it doesn't, there is still some binding occuring somewhere around the darthead. Check the black web again, scrape or file as necessary, and try spinning the bullseye a second time.

CLEAN THE MISSED DART DETECTOR - The missed dart detector on Galaxy boards is a normally-closed switch, so anything that adds resistance to the contacts can make them more sensitive. Buildup from nicotine, finger oils, etc, can change its electrical properties. The contacts are gold plated, and should be wiped with isopropyl alcohol and a soft cloth. DO NOT use anything abrasive on the contacts. This should be done regularly; whenever you perform other routine maintenance, clean the missed dart detector. This may prevent some minor service calls and keep the missed dart detector performing properly. Also periodically check the contacts for wear, and replace them if any gold plating is missing.

CHECK ALL HARNESS CONNECTIONS - Make sure all connectors are well seated and clean. Use alcohol or a pencil eraser to remove dirt or other buildups on the pins if necessary.

CHECK ALL I.C.'s ON CIRCUIT BOARDS - Make sure all I.C's are firmly seated in their sockets, and there is no excessive dust or dirt on the boards. If any I.C. contacts look dirty or tarnished, they can be cleaned in the same manner as connector pins. Always be sure that you are free of static discharge; the best way to do this is to wear a wrist strap, and attach it to a bare metal area on the coin door. Place any I.C.'s to be cleaned in anti-static foam before walking away from the game. Be careful not to bend the pins while cleaning and reinserting.

CHECK TIGHTNESS OF MOUNTING SCREWS AND NUTS - Check coin door housings, earth-ground wire lugs, and power supplies to be sure that all mounting hardware is tight. Loose mounting hardware on any of these components can cause poor grounding of the game, and may increase the likeliness of static discharge related problems.

FOR OLDER 6000'S OR CONVERTED GAMES - If you have capacitors soldered directly to either coin switch, **cut them off**, they are no longer necessary, and may cause coin door lockups if they ever fail.

Free binders are available to keep Tech Tips issues together. Write or call us to request one.

IN THE NEXT ISSUE OF ARACHNID TECH TIPS: Spider Writer Screen Contest Winner // Hooking up to Pay Phones // VGD Updates // and Much More !!!

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