

QCDA Darts: WHAT TO EXPECT

FOR NEW HOST BARS

BASICS:

Alright, you've decided you want to put dart boards on the wall, and become a host location for one or more dart teams playing in the QCDA league. Welcome to the QCDA. Some basic items you will need to know, and provide, are described below, and your ability to provide them, or assimilate to them, will determine your success as a "Dart Bar" in Charlotte. The keys are providing a clean, fun atmosphere, where dart players feel welcome and comfortable, is foremost for success in hosting darts in Charlotte. There are several high quality establishments already accustomed to supporting darts in the area, and they provide some of the best dart set-ups in the country, and certainly the state, providing dedicated space, special lighting setups, and new equipment for play. While not required to meet these standards, they are your competition.

LEAGUE:

League play requires 2 boards be provided for the first team hosted in the league, and up to two teams can be hosted for every two boards provided. For instance, if you have 2 boards, you may host up to 2 teams, 4 boards can host up to 4 teams, and so on. League matches are played on 2 boards per Home Team. Although not always the case, teams typically are scheduled home and away on alternating weeks. There is a \$30 Bar Sponsorship Fee per team you host, payable to the QCDA prior to start of league play. There are two 15 week league sessions held each year, one starting around the beginning of February, and one around the middle of August. You will be required to provide an approved set up of boards and lighting prior to hosting teams. You can coordinate this with the Vice President/League Director, and his/her league committee. He/she can be reached via email from our website league page, or officer page. You will also be required to provide your own players, so it's best to have your boards set up well in advance of the start of league. Convincing patrons that visit your establishment to join the league is the best way to increase your benefit, and to ensure loyalty to your bar. Brand new players are always welcome, and they can visit the new players' page for information.

BAR REPRESENTATIVE:

Once you are hosting a team, you become a member establishment of the QCDA, and are provided the opportunity to be represented on the QCDA Board by a Bar Representative, named by the owner or manager of the establishment. The only requirement is that the bar representative cannot be an owner. Employees and players are fine. That representative is

expected to attend the monthly board meetings held the 2nd Wednesday of each month as identified on the main page of the website. They should gather information about the happenings in the association, offer assistance in running or hosting the several events put on by the QCDA, and share opportunities and special events hosted by the establishment with the QCDA members. This person is your direct liaison with the QCDA League. If you have any interest in hosting banquets, or any QCDA sponsored function that brings in league players, this person will be the one that will inform you, the owner/manager, of who you need to contact to put in bids, etc. for such events, and will be the person informing you of what events are coming up as opportunities for you to host.

BLIND DRAWS:

Another darting opportunity you can provide are bar sponsored “blind draws” or other types of tournaments. They are not run in association with or affiliated with the QCDA, but since QCDA players are your likely clientele, it makes sense to share and coordinate the opportunities with the other establishments and players. While there are no rules against it, it’s best to not host events on night already utilized by another host establishment. There are typically not enough players playing in the Charlotte area outside of league to support several events on one night, and usually both establishments are negatively affected. If you chose to provide a weekly event, you will need to make sure you have enough boards, space and service to support it. If any of these are lacking, you will make a poor impression on players, and likely lose your chance of maintaining them week to week.

SET-UP:

You can get an idea of what’s out there by visiting our “bars” page on the website to find current host establishments, and visit them to see what typical set-ups look like. While not entirely necessary to emulate them, it is important that your set up meets ADO standards for height, and distance, and the boards are approved bristle type boards. You will need to dedicate enough space for two boards minimum, and associated score boards, with the score board, and dart board being on the same plane. The two dart boards don’t necessarily have to be side by side, or on the same wall, but it is preferred by most teams. The space provided for darts play should be separated from other areas of the bar, such that people walking in and out of doors, bathrooms, walkways, etc. do not lead patrons into the play area, and are not along the toe line or in the path of sight for players while they are throwing. The toe line (Oche, Hockey) can be either flush, or raised. Flush lines can be purchased online through several distributors, and in some cases through beer distributors. Backboards can be obtained in the same fashion.

The distance from the face of the dart board to the throwing line is 7’9-1/4”. The Height of the board is 5’8” from the floor to the center of the bull. If the toe line is flush, the line is measured from the front of the “tape” or provided toe line. If it is raised, such as a strip of

wood, metal, or plastic, the measurement is to the back, so a player isn't required to stand on it. There should be at least 2' provided between any side walls, or stub walls and the outside edge of the board. Likewise, there should be 3' between the outside edges of two adjacent boards. Score boards can be placed between the dart boards. It doesn't matter which side the score board is on, as both are acceptable.

Lighting should be non-directional, flood type lighting. Florescent light seems to work the best, but multiple flood lights in a track light type format will also suffice, provided the light for each board comes from both sides of the board to eliminate shadows.

Other considerations for play should be providing sufficient space behind the toe line for as many as 8 players to stand waiting on their turn between tables, seating, or clear space required for pool, or other amenities in the bar. One rule is that waiting players must stand a minimum of 2' behind the player throwing, so that gives an idea of how much space is required. If possible, the bar set up should direct any through traffic behind this waiting area.

Another is to provide easy access to restrooms and the bar, such that dart players don't have to interfere with other patrons involved in darts, pool, foosball, dining, etc. Simply providing a clear path between each will keep all patrons happy and comfortable.

Service has been an issue in some establishments. If wait staff isn't provided, Bar staff needs to understand that players often like to indulge in various beverages during play, and that access in a relatively quick fashion is preferred. If bar staff isn't prepared to service the patron in the short duration between throws, you will likely end up with unsatisfied players, and they will be less likely to return. Generally observant, service oriented bar staff is more than sufficient to handle the typical dart player, or team, and will likely be rewarded accordingly come tab time.

Again...welcome to the QCDA. There are always people willing to assist in the set up of dart boards, lighting, scoreboards, etc. at new bars. Contacting any of the board members, or officers is the best chance for obtaining this help. Hopefully, this discussion provides enough background to getting you started in hosting teams in the QCDA league. Happy Darting!

Feel free to contact me for further information.

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