

Dartiquette vs. Darticuss

By E. Irene Goodwin aka Mean Irene

A Guide for Team Captains

I'm an avid steel-tipper. I'll only play soft-tip if it's the only game I can find. What both types need is a stiff dose of Dartiquette – the antidote for Darticuss. And, if I sound sanctimonious, I assure you I've had my fair share of "foot-in-mouth" extractions.

Dartiquette? What the heck is that?

Simply put, it is all about manners, attitude, fair play, and behavior toward fellow darters before, during, and after a match.

1. Show up on time
2. Inform your team captain if you can't make it to a game so that he/she can find a replacement.
3. Always, always start each match with a 'shoot well,' a 'high five,' or a handshake.
4. Keep your distance when your opponent is at the oche - at least 2 feet behind him/her.
5. Keep quiet during your opponent's turn.
6. Acknowledge a good toss only if it was a good toss. It would be better to say "Good group!" or "Good effort" rather than "Good darts," otherwise; you come across as patronizing your opponent.
7. Show your respect for your opponent by not trying to engage him/her in chitchat during a match.
8. Stifle your fits and outbursts, as they are a detriment and distraction to everyone's game. (If this is a persistent problem, I recommend placing a roll of duct tape in plain view as a subtle reminder.)
9. Always end a match the same way you started it – with a "thanks for the game" and a 'high five' or handshake.
10. If playing partners, cooperate with your partner and jointly plan your strategies. Treat your partner with respect even if he/she does not play at your level of expertise.
11. Maintain a positive attitude! Synergy really works in partnerships and teams.
12. Don't touch your darts until the scorekeeper has tallied your score and you both agree on the score.
13. Throw your darts AFTER your opponent returns from the board and is BEHIND you.
14. If you are keeping score, stand absolutely still while facing the board, and don't say anything unless the player at the oche asks a question about where his/her dart landed or how much is left on his/her score. DO NOT TELL THE PLAYER WHAT TO SHOOT FOR.
15. Toss only ONE dart at a time unless you are 'splashing' for a line-up.
16. Never throw your darts at ANYTHING except the dartboard!
17. Play by the rules.
18. Take responsibility for your poor toss! Don't try to pass it on to the scorekeeper, the big dart wind, the guy at the next board, etc. DO NOT SNIVEL!
19. Stay engaged! If you are between turns or awaiting your next game, stay involved in your teammates' efforts at oche. Don't abandon them just because you aren't actually playing in that match.
20. Promote the sport of darts:
 - Join a league
 - Hold a league position
 - Be a team captain
 - Attend league meetings
 - Keep score when needed
 - Introduce the game to friends
 - Run blind draws
 - Play in the qualifiers
 - Volunteer to help set up tournaments
 - Hold dart clinics
 - Recruit league members
21. Always play your best game every game, even if it is a 'round robin' format in which you find you have nothing to gain but the practice. Did a winner truly win if any of his opponents 'rolled over' and gave up? How disrespectful is that? 'Rolling over' is bad sportsmanship!
22. Tell your league officers/tournament directors thanks for doing a fine job because for the most part, it really is a thankless job.
23. If you are a team captain, do our sport a favor and put bad sportsmanship complaints in writing and send them to your league board of directors so that the bad behavior doesn't persist to the detriment of the sport and your league.
24. Making points in Cricket IS the game, but EXCESSIVE pointing – just to prolong the game into infinity when the outcome will still be the same – is just plain BAD for the sport. Winning is one thing. Needlessly humiliating your opponent is another.
25. If you are being taken advantage of in the aforementioned Cricket scenario, and there is no possible way you can win back the game, then take charge of the situation by saying, "Great darts! You win!" and forfeit the game. Don't let your opponent use you as target practice unless you enjoy watching your opponent rack up huge numbers! By forfeiting, you discourage bad sportsmanship and hopefully teach your opponent how to "play nice." You also keep your precious ego intact.
26. Don't desert a blind draw partner in the middle of a tournament! That's just plain rotten!
27. Try to time your bathroom needs so that you don't interrupt the game.