

BINGO LINK

The only magazine produced for the bingo industry

Issue 61 Summer 2003

What the papers say:

How to make bingo big news



AMUSE UK:

All the latest AWP's



AGM 2003:

Full details inside

Bingo for Breakthrough!

Having achieved staggering success in supporting Macmillan Cancer Relief, The Bingo Association is continuing to support the cause of cancer as, unfortunately, the disease affects most people, either directly or indirectly. The Association is delighted to announce that this year we will be supporting the research and awareness charity Breakthrough Breast Cancer



with an exciting fundraising campaign. 'Bingo for Breakthrough' will run in October, which is national Breast Cancer Awareness Month, symbolised by the pink ribbon.

The UK has one of the highest incidences of breast cancer in the world, with an estimated 39,000 women diagnosed every year and over 1,000 women dying every month. This means most bingo players will have been touched by breast cancer, either personally or through friends, family or colleagues. However, breast cancer is not simply a female

issue. Around 300 men are diagnosed with breast cancer each year and thousands experience the anxiety of having the women in their lives affected by it.

Breakthrough Breast Cancer is committed to fighting the disease through research and awareness, and has established the UK's first dedicated breast cancer research centre in partnership with the Institute of Cancer Research. Breakthrough's challenge is to raise money to fund ground-breaking research intended ultimately to eradicate breast cancer by discovering the causes of the



disease, finding methods of prevention and developing new treatments.

Breakthrough also works hard to raise awareness of breast cancer issues among the public, policy makers, health professionals and the media. It campaigns for policies that support research and a pioneering approach to breast cancer services in the UK.

Bingo Association Chairman Sir Peter Fry says, 'Bingo clubs up and down the country have always shown

tremendous generosity when raising money for worthy causes such as the fight against cancer. We hope that, through their continued generosity, we will be able to make a substantial contribution to the work of Breakthrough.'

Breakthrough Breast Cancer representatives will be attending The Bingo Association and National Bingo Game AGMs this year (see page three). For more details about the charity, visit www.breakthrough.org.uk

On the up and up

A survey of UK gaming industry trends reveals that not only is bingo becoming increasingly popular, the profile of the typical player has evolved dramatically. The most recent annual GamblerTrack survey, by research consultancy ORC International in September 2002, questioned 4,000 adults in 180 UK locations, revealing several choice facts.

Why the renewed interest?

The proportion of the UK population playing bingo has risen by 4 per cent since 2001, to 3.1 million. This is surprising, considering that



the study found that other activities such as the National Lottery, the football pools and fruit machines are in decline. There are several probable reasons for this reversal:

- Innovative marketing campaigns, with coverage of celebrity players, have helped revamp bingo's image.

- Technical enhancements and club refurbishments have modernised the game, making it more appealing.

- Compared to other gambling activities, bingo is relatively low cost and is perceived as

providing value for money.

- Deregulation of the game has brought benefits such as greater flexibility of prizes.

This may be obvious to those in the industry, but in a fairly static gaming industry, the rewards of success are not to be underestimated.

Who's playing?

Bingo remains predominantly a female preserve, but the number of men playing is slowly starting to increase as they get switched on to the game. Bingo is also



getting younger: in 2002 over 70 per cent of players were under 55, with 35 per cent under 35. The 25-34s now account for as high a proportion of players as the 65+ age group.

The GamblerTrack study shows that bingo has changed its image by implementing progressive changes and

investing in additional marketing effort. These factors should ensure that the game continues to go from strength to strength in what is a fiercely competitive and saturated market.

To purchase the report, please contact Sayrian Connell on 020 7675 1153 or visit the website at www.orc.co.uk.

Win a weekend for two at a Warner Holidays Classic Resort! see page 11

The National Game

Quarterly news and update from Chief Executive, Paul Talboys

Work is currently underway on the final versions of our television advertisements for this year, which are on air from mid-March to mid-May. Following the success of last year's executions we have kept the same two characters (football mum and army assault course) but have a new look and caller. Many of you will recognise Ricki Denton, main caller from Mecca Woodgreen, London, doing a great job at the end of both commercials.



At the time of writing, our Mothering Sunday £500,000 game is yet to be played, however, you may well be reading this having already enjoyed a very successful game and great ticket sales, helped by the current round of television and press advertising. This game is particularly significant as it sees the implementation of the new variable stake software. Once development of the final version is complete we will have a much more flexible basis on which to play future games. Stake contributions from and to clubs can then be related precisely to the required prize.

Prize money distributed by the National Game in 2002 eased by over £1m to a grand total of £51,350,000. We hope that 2003 will deliver further increases for players and operators alike.



National Bingo Game: key statistics

Total prize money since the game began	£725,179,338
Total prize money played for in 2002	£51,350,136
Total prize money played for in 2003 to date (Feb)	£6,995,730
Biggest single prize	£950,000

Biggest games for 2002

Tuesday 30 April with ticket sales of	940,039
Tuesday 28 May with ticket sales of	915,514

Biggest games to date for 2003

Sunday 26 January with ticket sales of	795,373
Sunday 2 February with ticket sales of	779,482

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2003 Diary



2-3 April AMUSE UK

Norbreck Castle Hotel,
Blackpool, UK
Tel 0870 429 4354

8-9 May

European Casino Summit
Hyatt Regency Hotel,
Thessaloniki, Greece

14 May

The Bingo Association & National Bingo Game AGM
Queen Elizabeth II
Conference Centre,
Westminster, London, UK

22 May

Eurotechno
Hotel Melia, Barcelona,
Spain

If you have any key dates or events that Bingo Link readers should know about, please drop us a line.

Bingo in the news

The tail end of 2002 saw a considerable amount of press coverage for bingo, a lot of which was just before and after the £1m game – the total value of which was in excess of £250,000! A considerable amount of the national daily newspaper coverage was focused on winner Paula Young, which was greatly helped by the immediate availability of a photograph of the winner. This clearly demonstrates the potential value of a club manager who is able to persuade a winner to agree to full publicity and takes a good picture on the night. The importance of this to both the winning club and the industry are immense (see page seven).

Overall, 2002 was a good year for bingo publicity, with the vast majority of coverage being of a positive nature. More national coverage was achieved as a result of starting to establish relationships with key publications such as *The Sun*, *The Sunday People*, *Take a Break*, *Chat*, *Best*, *Inside Soap* and *Bella*. We hope that 2003 will see considerably more media coverage of bingo, with more managers able to secure winner co-operation.

Press coverage for 2002

General bingo articles	882
NBGA-led articles	798
The Bingo Association	28
Business coverage	54
TOTAL	1,762

Remember you're a Womble

Loveable litter collectors the Wombles have returned – and not just to Wimbledon. Great Uncle Bulgaria and his team were at the height of their popularity in the late 1970s, with books, a TV show and a successful recording career. They never completely faded away and are now popular with a whole new generation of fans, many of whom have been introduced to these environmentally aware characters via children's satellite television channel, Nick Jr.

There is a whole Wombles network out there, with an official website, an online community group with Yahoo, over 50 books available on Amazon, three current music CDs

and official merchandise.

Ace Limited is the sole UK supplier of the six most popular characters: Great Uncle Bulgaria, Wellington, Bungo, Tobermory, Orinoco and MacWomble, each of which is available in six sizes, from laptop to gigantic.

Ace prides itself on securing licenses and developing the products itself rather than distributing for other companies. Managing

Director Andrew Hemsall said, 'The bingo industry has a high demand for branded merchandise, but in this brand-conscious world there are so many to choose from. Ace believes in traditional branded products that stand the test of time – such as the Wombles, which will still be popular next year when the Hulks and the latest PlayStation characters are long forgotten.'

In addition to classic characters such as the Wombles and Pooh Bear, Ace offers non-branded product – ranging from Easter chicks to traditional teddy bears. To find out more, contact Bingo Sales Manager Rachel Brothwell on 07880 943985 and get wombling.



Annual General Meetings

Following the success of 2002's combined AGMs for The Bingo Association and The National Bingo Game, it has been agreed to continue with this arrangement for this year's meeting on 14 May

The impressive turnout in 2002 resulted in standing-room only, a situation which we want to avoid on 14 May this year. To guarantee seats for all those attending, we will be holding this year's AGMs and presentations at the Queen Elizabeth II Conference Centre, in the heart of Westminster. This well-known venue is literally around the corner from last year's meeting place and provides us with plenty of space in both the main hall and breakout area.

The format of the event will follow that of last year, which was well received by those attending, with formal business



This year's event will take place at the Queen Elizabeth II Conference Centre in the heart of Westminster

completed by 11.15am. Guest speakers this year will include: Peter Dean, Chairman of The Gaming Board for Great Britain; Richard Caborn, Minister for Sport; John Greenway MP, Shadow Minister for Sport & Tourism; and Martin Hayward, Chairman of

leading strategic marketing consultancy The Henley Centre.

Accommodation for 13 May is available to members at a preferential rate on a first-come, first-served basis at The London Marriott Hotel County Hall. Rooms should be booked directly with the hotel, using the booking form circulated to members.

The Bingo Association will be hosting a drinks reception for members only on 13 May, 6-8 pm, at The London Marriott Hotel County Hall.

For full details visit The Bingo Association website: www.bingo-association.co.uk

Programme - AGM 14 May

9.30am	Coffee and registration
10.00-10.30am	NBGA AGM
10.30-11.00am	The Bingo Association AGM
Coffee break	
11.30-12.00am	Speaker: John Healey MP, Economic Secretary, HM Treasury
12.00-12.30pm	Speaker: Peter Dean CBE, Chairman of The Gaming Board
12.30-1.00pm	Speaker: The Rt Hon Richard Caborn, Minister for Sport
1.00-2.15pm	Address: Roy Ramm, Compliance and Security Director, London Clubs Int.
Lunch	
2.15-2.45pm	Speaker: John Greenway MP, Shadow Minister for Sport & Tourism
2.45-3.15pm	Speaker: Martin Hayward, Chairman, The Henley Centre
CLOSE	



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Thank you all!

Game for Life Week 2002 was the biggest success of our three-year relationship with Macmillan, raising over £500,000 in a single year. Macmillan Cancer Relief would like to thank bingo clubs and members across the UK for supporting them so fantastically and for smashing the £1 million target!

'All the money raised by bingo clubs has gone directly to the patient grants programme, which helps people with cancer who are in financial difficulties as a result of their diagnosis. Overall, your donations have made it possible for approximately 3,500 grants to be awarded to cancer patients and their families in the UK. These grants have been awarded for a specific area of need, which could be a new fire, a comfy armchair, a family convalescent break or fares to hospital for treatment. Whatever the reason for the grant, the reaction is always the same – a huge amount of relief and gratitude:

"Our new fire is lovely. We were managing with a Calor Gas one, which was not good for my chest, as I have lung cancer. The new one is much cleaner and healthier. Thank you so much."

"Just a few lines to say thank you for the cheque you sent us. When the postman calls

Particular thanks and congratulations go to the following clubs, which all won regional awards for their fantastic efforts during Game for Life Week 2002:

Regions	Highest fundraising club	Highest fundraising club per admission
Scotland	Carlton Club, Livingston	Quayside Bingo, Lossiemouth
Northern England	Gala Bingo Club, Rotherham	
The North West and North Wales	Mecca Club, Knotty Ash	Gala Bingo Club, Rhyl
The Midlands	Gala Bingo Club, Great Park	Walkers Bingo & Social Club, Wednesbury
London and The South East	Cricklewood Beacon Bingo Club	Gala Bingo Club, Cambridge
South Wales and South-West England	Gala Bingo Club, Swindon	Judges Hall Bingo Club

most days my heart misses a beat dreading what bill might be inside the envelope on the mat. When your letter arrived and I read that you were going to give us a grant to cover our £280 mortgage arrears, I could not believe my eyes. Straight away I showed it to my wife; I must admit, it did bring a few tears to her eyes."

On behalf of those cancer patients and the Macmillan fundraising team, thank you for your unstinting support and we wish you every success in your new charity partnership with Breakthrough Breast Cancer.'

Samantha Corfield, Macmillan Cancer Relief



Bingo Association Chairman Sir Peter Fry (above right) presented the cheque to Peter Cardy, Chief Executive of Macmillan Cancer Relief

A fishy tale A cautionary note to all sea-faring fundraisers!

If you're raising money for charity, it seems reasonable to do something you enjoy. Well, that was the theory when Dave Hawkes from Cowells Arrow decided to organise a sea fishing trip. Sponsors pledged cash for the number of fish caught and eight of Dave's industry colleagues joined him on his nautical jaunt. The shipmates' roll call was Bernard Hunt (Gala Group), Dave Weetman (Meeron), Paul Davison (ILS), Ian and Mike Pilkington (Hippodrome, St Helens), Ken and Jason Forester and Alan Weaver (Victoria Bingo, Salford).

This motley crew hit Whitby late one evening and did what any self-respecting group of men does on an



The reel thing: a sponsored charity fishing trip seemed like a good idea at the time...

all-male trip – they went for a few beers and a curry, a decision they probably regretted when they were roused from their slumber at 5am the next day. Tea and bacon sandwiches worked wonders, and soon they were all raring to go – fresh bait at

the ready – as their skipper Dick sailed the *Saxon Lady* out of a calm harbour.

Three hours later and with land a distant haze on the horizon, the boat was, in the words of Dave Weetman, 'dancing to some demented fiddler's tune'. Mike Pilkington

takes up the story: 'We didn't realise we'd chosen the day of the highest and fastest tide for 50 years. Though our boat appeared stationary, it was, in fact, moving on a four-knot tide with a 6ft swell – not exactly ideal fishing conditions.' And it doesn't take an expert to predict what happened next. Beer, curries and bacon butties all became a matter of regret as they parted company from some team members in very undignified circumstances.

Skipper Dick decided to move location in search of cod and, surprisingly, this helped improve the health of the casualties and restore the jocular mood. However, conditions did not improve and the vote was taken to return to shore. With a force 7 gale gusting, this was easier said than done. Four hours

of the skipper steering diagonally to the waves to minimise the roll while shouting helpful comments such as, 'Don't worry, lads. I've sailed in worse than this!' – plus waves of 12–20ft dousing the party at regular intervals – was quite a test for our bingo landlubbers.

Later that evening, refreshed by hot showers, the party discussed how to report the disappointing tally of three fish. It was decided to tell the truth and make the sponsors pay up for heroism above and beyond the call of duty. That decided, they dispersed with, believe it or not, the wholehearted agreement of all concerned that there should be a rerun next year. We wish them luck with their fundraising for Breakthrough Breast Cancer in Bingo for Breakthrough week.

The Golf Society's swinging in the rain

Despite terrible weather last year, The Bingo Association Golf Society (BAGS) members are looking forward to what will hopefully be a dry event in 2003!

Last year's BAGS Golf Day took place on 9 July at the Forest Pines Golf Complex in Lymm, Lincolnshire on what must have been the wettest day of the whole summer. Despite this, however, the determination of true athletes shone through and once the rain eased up after lunch the golfers were out on the fairway. The day's winners were:

- **Nesfield Cup** Rob Rollinson and Francis Gillard, Walker (Leisure) UK Ltd
- **Maygay Cup** Melvyn Ward, The Edward Thompson Group
- **Secretary's Cup** Gary Banks, Brooks Wilkinson Ltd
- **Jarglen Jug** John Monaghan, Gala Clubs



● **Sail Salver** John Beasty, a guest of Welcome Clubs

The first-ever team prize of four bottles of brandy, sponsored by Gary and Lawrence Armstrong of Cavenbridge Ltd, was won by David Ryley, John Lewis, David Atkin and Kevin Dean.

In the evening players and guests were entertained by the David Edwards Trick Shot Show, which involved the wackiest set of golf clubs ever seen. After dinner, a



Nice weather for ducks! Above, from left: Fred Barlow, John and Andrew Sail and David Waterhouse; John Anderson from The Cambos Organisation

cheque for £500 was presented to Lynn France, from Macmillan Cancer Relief, by Derek Westcott of ECM Systems. This was followed by a further £211 raised from the charity auction excellently organised and compered by John Lewis, a guest of David Hawkes, Chairman of the Golfing Society. A delighted Lynn

thanked everyone for their generosity. In spite of the weather all involved had a great day.

David Hawkes is pleased to announce that this year's golf day will take place on Tuesday 8 July at The De Vere Herons' Reach Hotel and Golf Complex in Blackpool. Set in 236 acres of the Fylde coast countryside, it offers challenges for golfers of all abilities. The £65 entry fee includes refreshments, complimentary golf balls on the driving range, a nine-hole morning competition, lunch, an 18-hole competition in the afternoon and a three-course dinner with wine. Details and an entry form have been sent to Association members and we hope that this event will prove as popular as last year's. Please contact Donna Black at The Bingo Association on 01582 860921 for further details or visit the website www.bingo-association.co.uk.

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Full house for fair pay at Gala Bingo equal pay launch

Barbara Roche MP, Minister for Women, visited the Gala Bingo Club in Cardiff on Thursday 27 March to launch the Equal Opportunities Commission's new Equal Pay Review Kit in Wales.

It was 'eyes down' at the Business Leaders Reception where Mrs Roche encouraged local business leaders to take a close look at their pay systems so that inequalities can be identified and pay gaps closed.

The Gala Bingo Club hosted the Business Leaders Reception in an innovative leisure sector partnership with the EOC.



Minister for Women, Barbara Roche MP launches the Equal Opportunities Commission's Equal Pay Review Kit at Cardiff's Gala Bingo Club

Other speakers included Welsh Assembly Government Minister Carwyn Jones, Andy Cunningham, Managing

Director of Gala Bingo and Neil Wooding, EOC Commissioner for Wales. Barbara Roche says, 'The

Government is determined to close the pay gap between men and women. Women working full time still earn only 81 per cent of full-time male earnings. This is due to differences in men and women's work experience and qualifications, the predominance of women in part-time work, travel patterns due to childcare and occupational segregation.

'We are giving women more choices about how they balance work and home responsibilities in order to make their valuable contribution to the economy. However Government cannot

do this alone. We must make sure that employers too recognise the valuable contribution women can make to economic success.

'I welcome the steps being taken by many employers to tackle this issue and hope others will follow suit.'

Andy Cunningham, Managing Director of Gala Bingo commented, 'We are delighted to have played host to this important event. Equality is of paramount importance to Gala Bingo and we are committed to reviewing our pay systems to ensure our pay practices reflect our principles.'

I was the weakest link...

by Alan Stockdale, Bingo Caller of the Year 2002

I haven't yet decided whether I was lucky or unlucky to be invited to take part on *The Weakest Link* and face the intimidating Anne Robinson!

The night before recording I felt as I imagine the gladiators of old Rome would have the night before combat. All too soon we were at the studio getting make-up. You need three changes of clothes that aren't stripy, patterned, blue or brightly coloured. And, of course, only one person is allowed to wear black! The researcher confirmed personal details, plus other information gleaned from phoning people at work. When we finally met Anne on set she knew all about us from reading our profiles.

Before filming started we practised writing names and swivelling the name plates. Finally, Anne made her entrance and, like Darth Vader,

commanded fear and respect from all in the studio. The lights began to spin, the music started and it was game on.

The first round flew by with no mistakes and we clocked up the quickest £1,000 in history. In reality the voting takes five minutes to write down all the names before shaking some blood back into your legs and relaxing with the people you're about to send off. Anne and her team of Devil's disciples were working on who to chew up, abuse and insult, all for the fun of those millions of fans around the country – many of whom like to watch just before going to play bingo. Perhaps this explains the ominous slow wink many of the bingo players now seem to give me!

Between rounds insults were traded and I was lucky not to be

picked on. Well, I'm a big, hairy bingo caller – what more ammo would one need? Luckily for me an ex-car salesman called Bob had a tight perm and under interrogation admitted to plucking his eyebrows. Caught the full force of her venom did poor Bob.

During the game I was lucky to be the strongest link on a number of occasions and got down to the last three. The round finished and we scrawled the names on the plates. I spent an uncomfortable few moments shaking legs and sipping water with the two people who might have just decided my time was over. We didn't talk much. The lights flashed and the music started as Anne re-entered the studio. The next thing I remember is the words: 'Alan, failed actor from Carlisle, you are the weakest link. Goodbye!'

And the competition winners are...

There was a feast of goodies up for grabs in the last issue of Bingo Link and, not surprisingly, a bumper crop of entries.

G Parrott from Rio Bingo Club, Canvey Island in Essex wins £30 of mouth-watering confectionery kindly donated by Hemingways. **Linda Griffiths** at Amlind (UK) Ltd of Llanelli, Carmarthenshire wins 10 bottles of miniature perfumes, courtesy of Just Everything.

J Martin, Gala Bingo in Leven, Fife will be hopping with delight when he receives his prize of six Easter bunny baskets from PMS International.

Well done to all the winners and many thanks to Hemingways, Just Everything and PMS International for supplying these great prizes.

feature

The power of the press

Sometimes a PR's lot is not a happy one – and sometimes it's absolutely marvellous, says Georgina Palmer, NBGA Regional Press Officer

While many club managers are switched on to the advantages of good, free publicity – especially from National Game winners – some are, frustratingly, less than media aware.

But two recent wins and the fantastic publicity we obtained in both national and regional media for them shows what can be done with co-operation and awareness. After all, good local publicity for a big winner brings a rush of customers into the club.

When Paula Young won £953,000 at Sheffield's Gala Parkway in December, Manager John Liddle went into action with his digital camera which he had taken along 'on the off-chance that we might have the winner'.

He had Paula ready to talk to me in his office when I phoned and between

us we got her to agree to go public.

By 11pm John had got home, downloaded his pictures onto his home computer and e-mailed them to me. I was able to send out the initial press release, with quotes from Paula, that night. The result was massive coverage in most key national newspapers, the majority using John's photo in colour. Detailed follow-ups for regional media were sent out the next day. Bulletin, the NBGA's broadcast media agency had Paula on local radio and TV on Monday and on Tuesday's GMTV.

John was fantastic and nursed her through the unfamiliar spotlight process. He put Paula and her two sons on the train to London and also made sure that they were met by



GMTV at the other end. Without John's foresight and the NBGA's publicity machine, Britain's biggest bingo win would have rated a paragraph or two at most instead of 47 cuttings and 15 broadcasts!

The media also loved another Gala Club story. Simon Abernethie, Manager at Charles Cross, Plymouth, alerted me to his winner's tale and got her to agree to be named. A month after Joanne Stephens' mother died, she took the ashes in an urn to the club to hear an Abba tribute band perform ('because Mum loved Abba!')

and ended a really bad run of luck with a win of £102,500. Joanne had had a brain operation six months previously, her house was due to be repossessed, her granddad died on Christmas Eve, followed by her mother in January. The press release we issued was well used, with 27 national and regional stories – this story will run and run.

And the moral of these tales?

Please be publicity aware!

Georgina Palmer can be contacted on 01438 718500.

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Blackpool gears up for AMUSE UK

Like them or loathe, them AWP's are big business and definite money spinners for most bingo clubs. If you didn't catch the ATE in London in January, there's still a chance to see what's new in the market when the North West hosts the AMUSE UK show at The Norbreck Castle Hotel in Blackpool on 2-3 April

Exhibitors at AMUSE UK 2003

Company	Stand no
Alarm Guard	23
All Change (Leeds) Ltd	311
AMF Bowling	312
Astra Games	140
Blackpool Pleasure Beach Ltd	17
Brent Sales	240
Britannia Leisure Services Ltd	13
CMS	335
Coin Leisure	18
Concept Games Ltd	330
Cosmic Video Amusements	14
Cromptons Leisure International Ltd	300
Crown Direct Ltd	200
Cummins-Allison Ltd	233
Deith Leisure Ltd	120
Electrocoin	1
Happ Controls Europe Ltd	7
Harry Levy Amusement Contractor Ltd	130
Jolly Roger (Amusement Rides) Ltd	333
Leon Deith Sales	313
Lordsvale Sales Limited	321
Machine Guard	22
MDM Leisure Ltd	340
Memo Park SAS	11
P & L Consultants	231
Premier Machine Trading	105
Prestige Seating Technology (UK) Ltd	32
RG Mitchell Ltd	25
Regal Amusements/ITM Leisure	28
SB Machines	220
Sound Leisure	141
TCS Funtime	315
The Novelty Capsule Company	235
Toyvend Plc	21
United Distributing Company	100
Vitco	143
Whittaker Bros (AR) Ltd	110

With 37 companies occupying net floor space of 937 square metres, the exhibition is virtually sold out; and, at 108 square metres, the biggest stand will house Crown Direct. Other machine operators and distributors will be at AMUSE UK, giving bingo operators an ideal opportunity to view the latest AWP machines and discuss their individual club requirements with AWP industry specialists. In addition to the change

in month from February to April, there will be a number of other structural changes in AMUSE UK 2003, which organisers have made in response to exhibitor feedback. On the show floor, a bar-café will be sited on the balcony. Social events include a pre-show networking event for exhibitors and customers on the evening of 1 April at The Springs Nightclub, Hilton Blackpool. The annual Hall of Fame dinner and

awards ceremony will once again be staged on the first evening of the show, 2 April. This year's headquarters hotel for AMUSE UK is The Imperial Hotel, Blackpool. To apply for free entry badges call 0870 429 4354 or fax 0870 429 4355. For enquiries about the pre-show networking event or the Hall of Fame dinner and awards ceremony, contact Samantha Byrne at ATE: tel 020 7713 0302; fax 020 7713 6630.

Wearing the Crown

Crown Direct continues to be one of the leading lights in amusement and gaming equipment distribution in the UK, aiming to provide both well-loved existing and exciting new products from around the globe, as well as the high quality service that has become its forte over the years.

The company, which has developed and grown as a result of its increasing reputation and exclusive product ranges, now operates its countrywide sales and distribution from offices in Glasgow, Preston, Burton-upon-Trent and London. Each is staffed by an experienced team of sales executives, administrators and distribution personnel. Many of the sales executives are road based and are keen to meet and greet customers, both old and new.

AMUSE UK enables Crown to bring forward its new season's range featuring first appearances from Maygay's Bottle It and JPM's Ring-A-Bell plus new versions of old favourites such as Crazy Fruits and Super Streak.

Spares@CrownDirect is a new initiative for which the company has taken additional space at AMUSE UK. This dedicated area will show Crown's commitment to proactive sales support through a display of spare parts and demonstrations of support packages. Spares Manager Martin Smith will be assisted by Product Support Technicians Ian Linge and Mike Carr. Crown Direct is at the forefront of changes within the UK amusement and gaming markets, unearthing new manufacturers and products or exploring links with companies in the USA and the Far East to develop a growing range of products that will benefit both operators and players alike.

Maygay Monkey Business

Maygay hopes its customers will be getting up to Monkey Business – the first lo-tech, simple-play AWP development from the company's specialist development subsidiary, Impulse Gaming. Over the past three years, Impulse has been hugely successful in the hi-tech single-site AWP sector and is now expanding into new markets.

Monkey Business has a traditional game format, with three reels and random holds and nudges. There is a maximum of three nudges per game, plus an auto-nudge facility. The objective is to gain entry into the feature game via the 27 Ways To Win bonus. Here players hope that the game 'goes bananas', as this is the £25 jackpot symbol!

Martyn Jones, Commercial Manager of Impulse Gaming, says: 'The Impulse team has proved its worth within the single-site sector, and we have been keen to reproduce this success in the bingo market. With Monkey Business, we hope that we have done ourselves justice with our first step onto your floor.' Maygay is not exhibiting at Blackpool but will be represented by distribution partners, so operators can see the game at the show.



feature

Mazooma bonanza

Celebrating a record-breaking 2002, Mazooma has achieved success in all sectors of the UK AWP market.

Underpinning that success has been the strength of its lo-tech games designed specifically for bingo and arcade application. The three-player Golden Game has become something of a cult with a record number sold into the major bingo chains and arcades alike. This stunningly simple game has across-the-board player appeal and encourages competition between players all eager to beat its top box for the chance of big money.

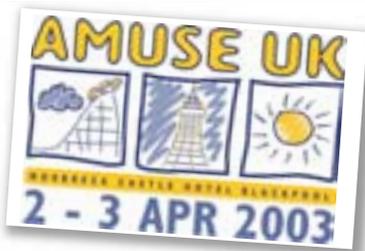
Red Hot X presents this winning formula

in a single-player casino-style cabinet, with its own extra set of reels housed in the top box. A special

combination on the bottom reels with the Golden X on centre line flanked by two red Xs either side kicks the top reels into action to present its winning-streak feature.

Making no excuses, Mazooma has taken this game to Arena status, offering a luxurious new version accommodating upwards of four seated players enabling their favourite game to be played in comfort.

Continuing our commitment to the lo-tech games sector, watch out for Casino Classic 7s, a single-player game due to join the Mazooma range.



Although club machines are now an integral part of the bingo offering, Mazooma was the first to bring a three-player jackpot to the market. Club Golden Game has been branded the Rolls-Royce of clubs with its glittering gold exclusion and powerful game putting it top of the performance chart. If a three-player isn't appropriate the single-player Club Red Hot X, again with gold exclusion, offers the same high power winning formula and presentation. Top pods offered on all Mazooma single-player casino cabinets present extra player appeal and bring a touch of Vegas to UK bingo.

Mazooma's range is available through sole distributor Crown Direct which will be showing at AMUSE UK.

Strongest Link

The Leisure Link machines distribution company has a sole supply agreement with Gala clubs to supply each of its 166 bingo clubs and 25 casinos with AWP's and Jackpot machines.

Gala operates a scheme to select the Leisure Link depot that, in their view, has provided the best customer care, installation standards, club communication and club service. Leisure Link's South West and Wales region scooped the Gala Depot of the year title last year, much to the delight of staff at the region's depots in Cardiff, Bristol and Exeter.

General Manager Len Taylor was presented with a trophy and certificate for the region, as well as a DVD player, two hand-held TVs, two Sony Walkmans and two watches – all of which were raffled off amongst the staff.

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Helping You To Accomplish Great Things

competition

Chill out! courtesy of Warner Holidays and Bingo Link

With the winter months behind us and spring in the air, thoughts will turn to summer holidays, short breaks and weekends away. Hands up all those who would like one of the latter, with someone else picking up the bill? Well, put your hand down and grab your pen because **Bingo Link** has teamed up with Warner Holidays to offer one lucky reader a fabulous prize of a weekend for two at one of Warner Holidays' Classic Resorts

Warner Holidays' **'Just For Adults'** short breaks are the perfect getaway. With 13 properties around the UK, a wide choice of accommodation and a range of activities available, there's something for everyone. All breaks have the same Warner welcome and value, with breakfast, three-course dinner and entertainment all included in the price of a four-night midweek, two- or three-night weekend break.

Historic splendour meets modern convenience

Warner Holidays' Historic Hotels are all Grade I or II listed buildings with extensive gardens and grounds. From the sumptuous setting of Thoresby Hall and the royal history of Littlecote House to the TV fame of Cricket St Thomas, which provided the setting for the popular series *To the Manor Born*, Warner hotels provide a range of unforgettable breaks.

From April 2003, a new spa and Mediterranean-style restaurant are set to open at Warner's flagship hotel Thoresby Hall. Guests can spoil themselves with a 'Spa Experience' which features luxurious treatments and facilities. After pampering, the guests can enjoy an evening meal at a choice of two restaurants – inclusive in the price of their stay.

Warner's Character Hotels offer everything you would expect from a leading leisure hotel: extensive grounds, stunning gardens and first-class facilities, including a nine-hole

EGU standard golf course at Alveston Hall Hotel; a new addition for 2003 is Sinah Warren, Hayling Island. At Classic Resorts the emphasis is on traditional fun. Chalet-style accommodation, well-tended gardens and abundant grounds are conducive to small, medium or large groups. Based in coastal locations, they are relaxed and informal by day with fabulous evening entertainment. Competitions, games, dancing, big-name cabaret artistes and summer jazz bands – there is something for everyone.

Warner accommodation ranges from traditional chalets at the resorts to Ambassador standard bedrooms and the unashamed luxury of the Royale rooms at the hotels. Royale rooms offer an extra degree of style and comfort. Exquisitely decorated, they're equipped with lots of luxury extras. Each is individually styled to create its own charm and ambience.

Fun, frolics and festivities

Warner offers a range of sporting and leisure facilities such as indoor and outdoor swimming pools and tennis courts, croquet, bowls, archery, darts, snooker, nearby fishing and much more. For an invigorating treat, guests can also enjoy health and beauty treatments, all available at an additional cost.

Optional extras at selected Warner hotels give guests the opportunity to experience something really different,

whether it's quad-biking or hot-air ballooning, attending a medieval banquet, going on a helicopter ride or participating in a murder-mystery break.

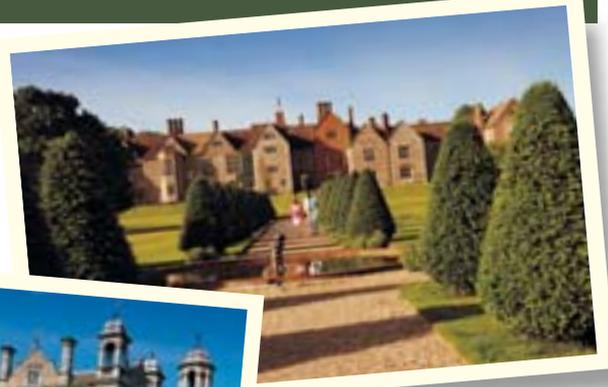
Warner is renowned for its variety of nightly entertainment. Each evening, guests are invited to enjoy live shows from resident entertainers, popular stand-up comedians, master magicians or top-name guest performers in Warner's fabulous purpose-built cabaret venues.

Warner's Starbreaks and Premier Starbreaks give guests the chance to see their favourite celebrity entertainers performing live. A spectacular line-up has been unveiled for 2003, including many show-biz favourites. If you're not lucky enough to win our prize you can still take advantage of special rates negotiated for *Bingo Link* readers.

How to enter

To take part, simply complete the entry form enclosed with this issue of *Bingo Link* and send it to the address given before 30 April 2003.

The prize of a Warner weekend for two adults at any Classic Resort is to be taken before November 2003 (excluding Bank Holidays). It is subject to availability and the terms and conditions in the Warner 2003 brochure. The winner will be chosen at random after the closing date. No correspondence will be entered into. There is no cash alternative to the prize.



Even if you're not lucky enough to win our holiday, *Bingo Link* readers can still take advantage of specially discounted rates at all Warner Holidays Classic Resorts and Hotels, including the flagship Thoresby Hall (left) and Littlecote House (above)

Fantastic year-round discount with Privilege Holiday Club!

Get 15 per cent discount off brochure price for weekend breaks at all Hotels (except Bembridge Coast Hotel) in January, February, June, July and August and 15 per cent off brochure price for weekend breaks all year at Classic Resorts, excluding Premier Starbreaks. There's also 10 per cent off all other breaks, including Premier Starbreaks.

This offer, which excludes Bank Holidays, Christmas and New Year, applies to new bookings only and cannot be used in conjunction with any other offer or discount. It is subject to availability and the terms and conditions in the Warner 2003 brochure. To request a brochure call 0870 242 2005 quoting code HG505. For reservations call 0870 601 6012, again quoting HG505.

Monitoring vital statistics

QMem and Q Bureau services can improve visit stats and membership figures, says Simon Kemp

As a Formula 1 motor racing fan, I was impressed by the unprecedented domination of Ferrari at last year's World Championship. It showed what can be done when all the important ingredients are maximised and properly combined – the perfect marriage of driver, car, engine, tyres. The key word is integration.

Working together

The National Bingo Game is putting bingo in front of an increasingly wider audience but you need more than a hall and a PA system to ride this wave of success and improve your longterm profitability. An Integrated Membership Solution uses your visit information, attracts new members, contacts existing members and improves profitability. The important

thing is the way that these separate components work together. Your membership system has to record the right data and let you use it. Promotional leaflets should present the right message in a consistent, high-quality style. Your contact with existing and potential members must be accurately targeted and professionally delivered. You should be able to determine the response to each of these contacts. All these areas must combine in order for you to get the maximum benefit.

On target

Most clubs request a swipe on entry from members and you should be able to extract information (including visit frequency, days, sessions and member postcodes) from the system

easily and quickly. The ability to try 'what if?' scenarios when selecting these extracts allows you to home-in on chosen targets. Then you should be able to either print your own labels (for small mailings) or arrange for a supplier to complete the mailing for you – depending on the number of addresses and your resources.

Swipe systems

Although the membership system is the cornerstone of this process, you must know your visit statistics in order to plot the success of any activity. You will need historical data to compare week by week, month by month and even year by year.

How thorough is your swipe-on-entry process? I suspect that most clubs have members who avoid, forget or spoil their swipe-on-entry, thus damaging your statistics and limiting your ability to determine

success. How are members being persuaded to swipe? How many swipe readers are located by each entrance and is this the best place for them? Some clubs award spot prizes within a session to encourage swiping. This may be possible with the addition of a ticket printer on the front desk; however, this can lead to technical problems and slows down entry to the club. Some membership systems can pick random cards from the session, making this process quicker and easier. Encouraging people to swipe on entry is vital – not just because you want the information, but because winners need to be confirmed as members when accepting their prize.

Capturing visit data

A membership system is vital to understanding who and where your best members are, but it should also

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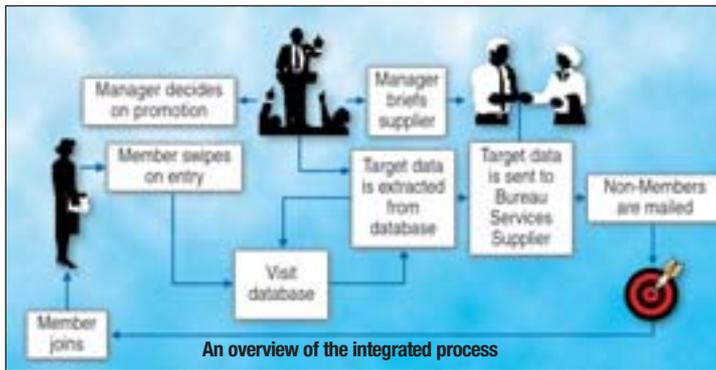
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features



indicate individual member and group attendance patterns – including sessions – over days, weeks and months, enable you to get at these members' addresses and send them mailings. Forthcoming attractions are one part of this, particularly when tempting the infrequent visitor.

New members

We are still faced with the problem of getting new members into the club. In the last article, I mentioned postcode mailing as one means of attracting them. Letting non-members

know about your club in residential areas which you already know are popular is a powerful mechanism, but for it to work effectively, it must be linked to your membership system. Identifying member clusters in postcode areas is an important part of the preparation for this.

Your membership database should allow you to find those potential new members and then put your message in front of them. This is where the completely integrated solution helps you. These operations are joined together seamlessly and allow you to

concentrate on the job of running the club. Having them performed by one company, such as Q Services, gives you one main contact and access to a number of experts without having to employ them all – saving time, effort and expense. Such a company would provide both software systems and bureau services to have the necessary complete understanding of the requirement.

The promotion process

Running a promotion – a common theme in every club I see – from concept, through preparation and execution to analysis of results takes time and effort. This may prevent the club running the promotion they would like – leaflets may not have been designed or printed properly, the mailing may not be sent on time and the chosen targets may not have been defined closely enough. An integrated solution can provide help in all these areas, from concept and design, printing, identification of the target names and addresses, the mailing itself and the effectiveness of

the promotion in terms of increased members and improved visits.

Tools of the trade

Would you like to send a mailing to those who have won games in the last month? Would you like to know how often they play after a big win and whether they attract new members? Does your membership system allow you to get this information?

A swipe-based system shouldn't just be a swipe reader passing visit information to a list of names and addresses. It is the starting point for improving visit statistics, attracting new members, increasing profitability and determining the effectiveness of marketing campaigns. Success isn't achieved and sustained by accident, but by hard work, great ideas and excellent tools coming together. Integrated software and systems such as those available from Q Services, which offers the bingo industry a Formula 1 service level, are the tools for your Grand Prix success.

For further details, please contact simonk@qservices.co.uk.

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Do you have any news items or features that you would like to see in Bingo Link?

Please e-mail Rosemarie Teece at

bingolink@bingo-association.co.uk

Next issue published July 2003

Thinking of Seating ?

On-Site Refurbishment ?

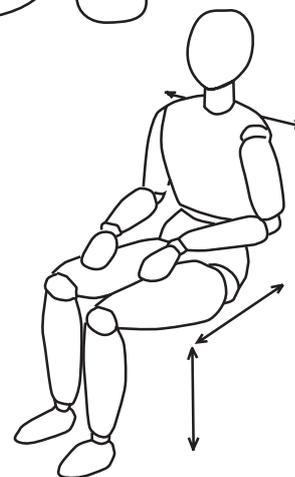
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