

Arachnid Tech Tips

A Publication Sponsored by Dartman and
Technician and Service Technicians' Association

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 package

The Black Widow and Leagues...

Since its release, the common question has been: "What do I have to do to get a Black Widow ready for league night?"

First, you have to give yourself some time. It will take a cooperative effort between your service technician and your league coordinator to get everything up and running. Although the process can be accomplished in less than half an hour, if this is your first time, plan on giving yourself some breathing room. Under pressure anyone can easily miss a step or two. A day or two would be nice, allowing you to test and become familiar with the system before actual league play.

Since the information for installing, networking, and setting up a Black Widow is covered in detail by the *machine's manual*, that material will not be repeated here. If you are the service technician installing and setting up the machine, familiarize yourself with that material before you arrive at the location. It is also a wise practice to copy the *Modem and ArachNet Checklist* from the manual and check off each item as it is completed. Record any hardware settings; ID, time and password settings on this sheet and leave it inside the machine for future reference. Also make a note of the machine's internal Serial ID number, Operator Password, Modem Password,

and phone number of the phone line connected to the Black Widow. The league coordinator will need this information for input into the Dartman League Management Software for that location. The league coordinator will also need to know the start and ending time of the call window (the time during the day that the modem is set to answer on 1 ring). A standard call window would be something like 3:00 a.m. to 7:00 a.m., preferably when no one is in the building to interfere with incoming modem calls.

The following information covers the steps required in the software: Dartman, the league management software; DartComm, the communications manager; to configure the Black Widow for league play. Even though this material is mainly for the league coordinator (the person managing the leagues on the central computer), service technicians should also be familiar with these steps. This will help in the coordinated effort to install and maintain a league system.

No Team Cards..

Rather than each team having a programmed team card, all team card information is stored on the Black Widow's hard drive. At the Black Widow teams choose their league and team from a menu to set up a match. This not only solves the problem of lost or damaged

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Arachnid products and Y2K...

Unless you've been stranded on a desert island for the last few years, you have probably heard about the Y2K problem. Put simply, some computers are going to have problems when the year clicks over to 2000. Your computer may or may not be able to give the correct date. This is related to the ability of the computer to store dates as four digits instead of just two. Both the BIOS and the operating system in a computer must be able to store dates in the four digit format.

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team cards; it also makes it easier to make any changes to team information during the league season. **This is the key concept for understanding the tasks required by the league coordinator to set up a Black Widow for league play.** You must generate the team files and then transfer them to the Black Widow at the location, prior to the beginning of league play.

Which Files Go Where..

The next concept to understand is that you only want to send team files to locations that are associated with a particular league. It would be senseless to have team files show up on machines in locations where those teams do not play. This is done automatically by DartComm and only requires a few more steps in Dartman.

Modify The Location Information..

If you look at a location screen (choose **LOCATIONS - MODIFY - PRESS F8**, pick a location and press **ENTER**) you will see the Stat Collection box at the bottom. For each location that has a Black Widow as the master game, complete the following information:

PHONE (DATA): Type in the locations phone number exactly as you would dial it. For example: If you need to dial "9" to get an outside line, enter 9,5551234. (The comma is used to force the modem to pause briefly before it dials the rest of the number.) If the location requires a long distance area code, enter 1(area code)(number) as 12225551234. You should get in the habit of skipping spaces or dashes between numbers (the program doesn't use them and they could cause confusion later in the process). Remember, the rule is: enter the phone number exactly as you would dial it.

BLACK WIDOW?: If the location has a Black Widow as the master machine enter, "Y"

MASTER BW SERIAL#: Enter the three character Serial ID number of the master Black Widow at the location. Since this number is in hexadecimal format (base 16) you may have a combination of numbers and the letters "a" through "f." Enter the number exactly as shown on the main Test/Setup screen on the Machine, e.g., 597 or 43d. Where letters appear in the ID number, **do not enter capital letters, use lower case.** The Serial ID Number is shown on the main Test/Setup Screen of the Black Widow. Do not use the product serial number stamped on the side plate.

PASSWORD: Enter the password that was keyed into the master Black Widow as the "Operator Password" and "Modem Password." Note: Both passwords on the Black Widow should be the same. It is also preferable to use the same password for all your locations; make it simple and avoid the "space" character. It doesn't have to be long; "ABC" works as well as "AR TR SS" or "LWNITDSH", and is easier to remember and input without mistakes.

SPECIAL CALL TIME: LEAVE BLANK! Unless you have a reason to call a location other than at the default call time (which you will set when generating a phone list - see below), then leave this field blank - no zeros! If you have a call time entered in every location, now is the time to go back and delete them all. Failing to do this will cause a conflict during automatic stat collections, which will cause the collection process to fail.

Generating A Phone List..

Once all your locations have been modified to reflect your Black Widow information, the next step is to generate an Auto-Phone List. When DartComm is asked to transfer team files via modem, it looks at the location phone numbers on this list and matches which leagues play at that location. When you have multiple leagues playing at a location, e.g., Monday, Tuesday and Thursday nights,

DartComm will send the team files for all these leagues at the same time. No matching phone numbers on the call list - No files are sent. Now you know why location data phone numbers are so important. Also, sending team files to a location will overwrite the existing team files on that machine.

To generate the phone list choose **STATS COLLECTION** from Dartman's Main menu, then choose **GENERATE AUTO-PHONE LIST**. Choose "yes" to the next prompt to generate the list. You are then asked to enter a **DIALING PREFIX**. Leave this blank - you have already taken care of this by entering it as part of the data phone number on each location's information screen. Enter a **DEFAULT CALL TIME**. The time you enter here should be one half hour after your machines are set up to answer on one ring. For example: If your call window starts at 3:00 a.m., enter "0330." The time is entered in "military" or "24 hour" time, where "0330" is 3:30 in the morning and "1530" is 3:30 in the afternoon. After entering the time choose **OK** to generate the list.

Generating Team Files..

Generating team files is the same as writing team cards. Instead of writing individual team cards, one at a time, generating team files will make a team card file for every team in every active league all in one operation. It is important to note that all past leagues on your computer be marked "inactive." All current leagues must be completely set up, including all League, Location, Team, Player, and Handicap information. Make sure the Playing Order and Match Options are saved with each league. Most error messages originated during the generation of team files are related to leagues that are not completely set up or set up improperly. The program will not generate any team files if it encounters an error with any league.



When you are ready to prepare your team files, choose **PREPARE BLACK WIDOW FILES** from Dartman's Main Menu, and then choose **GENERATE TEAM FILES**. If the program encounters any problems, giving you an error message, the error must be corrected within that league and generation re-run. If the program does not encounter any errors, the files will be created and stored on your local hard drive in the `\DM3\WIDOW` directory. There will be one file in this sub-directory named **(league name).leg**, for each active league.

Now Transfer The Files..

There are three methods you can choose from to transfer your team files to a Black Widow: Manual Modem, Automatic Modem, or manually with a Jaz/Zip** Drive. All three methods are described below.

Manual Modem:

Start the DartComm program, choose **MANUAL MODEM** from the Main screen and then select **BW OPTIONS**. You are given a list of call options to choose from. Select **SEND TM FILES** and **REBOOT** by clicking your left mouse button on the corresponding boxes allowing a check mark to appear. You can select any other option(s) you would like to accomplish during this call or de-select all the others to just send team files. When you have made your selections choose **OK** to return to the manual call window.

Next enter the phone number of the location where you wish the team card files to go. You must enter the phone number exactly as it appears on the **AUTO-PHONE LIST** in Dartman. You can look at the phone list by starting Dartman and choosing **STATS COLLECTION - EDIT PHONE LIST** and then **LIST**. Make sure the location you are calling shows up on the list and then make a note of the exact phone number shown there.

After the phone number is entered, press the tab key to move to the password field. Enter the modem password for that location and then choose connect. The modem will then initiate a call and your team files will be transferred.

Automatic Modem:

The automatic modem method is even easier than the manual modem. The night before your leagues are scheduled to play, generate a new Auto-Phone List in Dartman. The program will generate a call for every location that has league play scheduled for the following night. After your phone list is complete, run DartComm and select **AUTOMATIC MODEM** and then open **GLOBAL OPTIONS**. Select **SEND TM FILES** and **REBOOT**, as you did for manual modem, then choose **OK**. Make sure **AUTOMATIC MODE** is "ON", leave your computer turned on (you can turn off the monitor if you wish) and go to bed. At the preset time, your computer will call your loca-

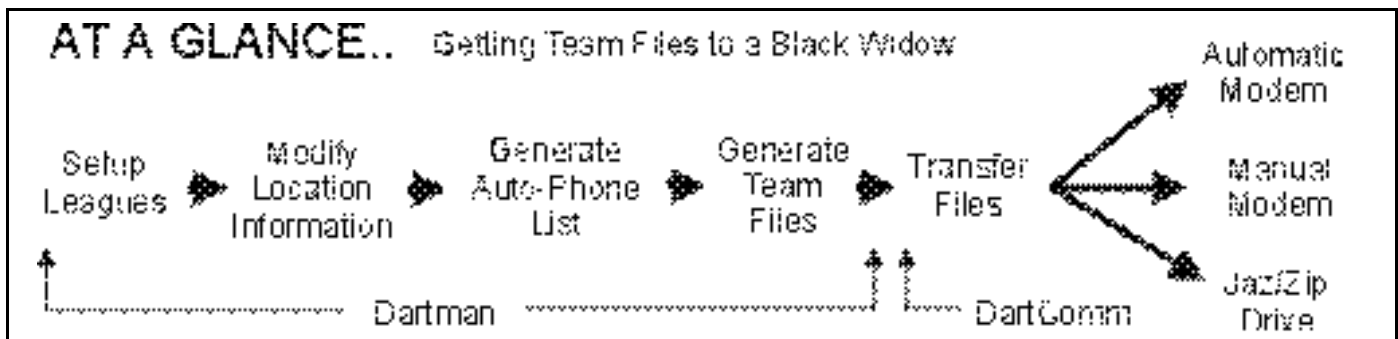
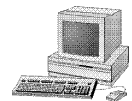
tions, one after the other, and transfer your files.

Jaz/Zip Drive:

Jaz/Zip drive transfers are initiated much the same way as modem transfers. Instead of sending the team files directly to the Black Widow, you transfer them to a Jaz or Zip Drive. All team files for all your leagues will be sent to the drive. The drive is then taken to the location and connected to the Black Widow to complete the transfer process. The software will check the **SERIAL ID NUMBER** of the machine, match it with which leagues play at that location, then transfer the appropriate team files.

A Note on Propagation..

If you have multiple Black Widows networked in one location, any files transferred to the "master machine" will be propagated (copied) to all other Black Widows connected to it. This propagation takes place immediately after the files are received by the master Black Widow. If you add another Black Widow to an existing network at one location, you will have to resend any necessary files to the master machine at that location, which will then be copied to the new machine. The master machine at a location is always the one with the modem and phone line connected to it.



** The Black Widow currently supports the use of Iomega's Jaz and Zip drives. Future software releases will add the capability of using Imation's SuperDisk.



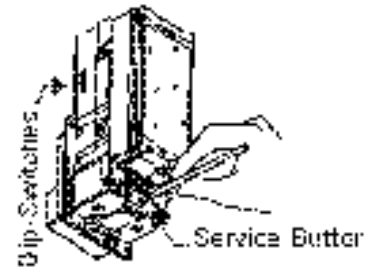
Flashing Bill Acceptor?

It has come to our attention that a few players feel distracted by the flashing bezel lights of the Mars AE2400 bill acceptor on the Black Widow.

If you find yourself on the receiving end of this complaint, you can easily program the bezel lights to remain on in a steady state.

Make a photo-copy of this page on white paper, cut out the two programming coupons and follow the simple procedure listed at right.

1. Set all dip-switches to the "off" position.
2. Locate the Service Button on the back of the unit. Depress the button once to enter set-up mode (bezel lights will flash rapidly).
3. Insert coupon face-up, arrow end first and verify settings were accepted:



ACCEPTED: Coupon returned immediately and bezel lights flash ten times when coupon is pulled out. Unit then goes into mode selected.

REJECTED: Coupon returned after ten seconds. If rejected, review instructions or try new coupon. See AE2400 Series Installation Guide for further information (shipped with Black Widow).

Flashing Bezel Lights

Steady Bezel Lights

Both diagrams include a vertical arrow on the right side pointing downwards, labeled "Insert Coupon Face Up".



Black Widow Status Indicators...

If you have noticed all the little dots at the bottom of the Black Widow's screen and wondered what they are, you are not alone. They provide a quick way of looking at the network status without going into the test mode. If you haven't noticed them it could be that your screen height is adjusted so they are off-screen, or that they are difficult to see against some background screens.

The indicators are different on master and slave Black Widows. The usage of both will be described below. It should be noted that at times, especially during the attract screens, that they could all be blinking. This is normal and is caused by the screen refresh function. It is not an indication of any malfunction or network activity. Refer to the drawing at the bottom of the page for locations of each indicator. They function as follows:

Network Status Indicators (Master)

Stats Collection Indicator: Is green whenever stats are being collected from other machines on the network. When the collection is finished, the indicator will turn black.

File Transfer Progress Bar: Is green when receiving a file, orange when sending a file to a specific node, and red when sending a file to all nodes.

Black Widow Status Indicators: Each Black Widow on a network is represented by one block starting with node 17 (the master node). The first block is always yellow because it is the master's block. Any other block will be dark red if it is off-line, dark green if it is on-line, light red if the master is sending that node a packet, or light green if the master is receiving a packet from that node.

Galaxy Status Indicators: There are always 16 blocks, representing Galaxy nodes 1 through 16. If a Galaxy is not present then its corresponding block will be light grey. If a Galaxy is present on the network, then its corresponding block will be one of the same four colors as the Black Widow Status Indicators above, depending on its status.

Network Status Indicators (Slave)

Stats Collection Indicator: Is not used on slave nodes.

File Transfer Progress Bar: Works the same as on the master.

Black Widow Status Indicator: Will only have one block representing itself. The block is red when the node is sending packets to the master and green when receiving from the master.

Galaxy Status Indicators: These are not displayed on slave nodes.

Bottom of Black Widow Screen (not to scale)





...Y2K CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1.

You will not experience problems with any of Arachnid's software products as long as your computer is "Y2K compliant." So the question is: "How do I find out if my computer is compliant?"

First you need to determine if the BIOS in your computer is compliant. If it isn't it must be updated or replaced. Once that is taken care of, you need to then determine if your operating system is compliant. Due to the thousands of different computers in use, it is beyond the scope of our technical support to determine if

your computer is compliant. There are many free testing products available on the Internet for "do it yourselfers" or you can contact a local computer repair consultant to check your system.

Galaxy: a special case..

Since all electronic dart machines operate on the principal of an internal computer, they are in theory susceptible to the Y2K problem. All machines prior to the Galaxy had no need to store dates, so they are not affected by the Y2K issue. The Black Widow is Y2K compliant, so that leaves us with the Galaxy as the only

dart machine that will have trouble with dates after 12/31/1999.

Arachnid is planning the release of a new software eeprom for the Galaxy later this spring. This "chip" will include new games, an alternative NDA point/mark handicapping scheme, and will also address the Y2K issue. Those operators who are still using Dartman II will have to upgrade to Dartman III for compatibility with the new eeprom. For those now using Dartman III, changing the game eeprom will be sufficient.

Hopefully, we'll all wake up New Years Day with only one headache...

HOW TO REACH US:

HAVE A TECHNICAL QUESTION OR PROBLEM? HAVE A TIP TO SHARE?



ON THE INTERNET: Check us out at <http://www.bullshooter.com> OR
E-mail us at techsupport@bullshooter.com



CALL US at 1-800-435-8319 and ask for Technical Service.
We will be happy to assist you in any way we can.



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