



Brian Daugherty, left, on *Mastermind* in 1990, got used to the adrenaline buzz of TV quiz shows

I

t's February 1990. A young man with wavy hair and a tight blue shirt sinks into the famous *Mastermind* chair,

confirms he is a postgraduate student and awaits the first question. "Which theory of the origin of the universe was supported by the discoveries of Penzias and Wilson in 1965?" asks Magnus Magnusson. "Big Bang," responds the contestant confidently – and correctly. So begins the quiz show adventures of Brian Daugherty.

Brian, a mathematician based in Hampshire, who sets the questions for *Brain of Mensa*, has appeared in around 20 TV and radio quiz shows, including *Mastermind* (five times), *Brain of Britain* (three times), *University Challenge* (twice), *Winner Takes All* and

Fifteen to One. And with a specialist subject of 20th-century astronomy, he did well in that first appearance, losing by just one point to a local government accountant from Carlisle. Indeed, it was to prove the start of a strong competitive run on *Mastermind*, reaching the semi-finals in 2004 and 2011.

The more Brian took part, the more he got used to the high-adrenaline experience of competing in front of TV cameras. "I suffered the post-programme effects very badly the first

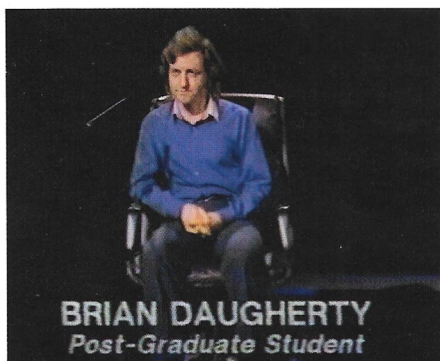
time," he admits. "I was supposed to go to the theatre in the evening but I couldn't face it. I just went to bed at 6 o'clock instead. But you soon get used to it – otherwise, full-time TV presenters would be permanently out of their minds."

ANY SAUSAGE ROLLS?

Bad news for food fans, though – the culinary fare on offer at quiz shows appears to be in decline.

"I received £50 for my first appearance, for a full day, including catering, plus rehearsal," says Brian. "Payment stopped when it was rebooted, along with rehearsals, and catering has gradually gone downhill. On my last appearance, I was back on the street within quarter of an hour of finishing recording. *University Challenge* was similar." Brian also

'I WAS BACK ON THE STREET WITHIN QUARTER OF AN HOUR OF FINISHING'



1990 Brian's first *Mastermind* appearance

warns of the consequences of getting a question wrong. One of his teammates on *University Challenge* answered a music question incorrectly, and for years afterwards his friends made a point of requesting the song for him at discos.

NO SWEARING!

Many other Mensans have made TV quiz appearances – such as Helene Parry, who took part in *BrainTeaser*, a Channel 5 quiz show recorded in Oxford in 2002.

"It was broadcast live at lunchtime, so we were warned beforehand 'No swearing!'," she says. "I met my three fellow contestants in the green room before the show. One lady had been on the pilot episode of the quiz and knew everything about it. My heart sank when I realised I had to play against her in the first round. Worse, when host Alex Lovell introduced us, my opponent told the nation that her hobby was fortune-telling.

"In round one, words of eight or more letters were split into pieces and rearranged, so we had to unscramble them. Her psychic powers must have deserted her that day, because I beat her 70 points to 10.

"In the final, I came up against a well-spoken chap, who pipped me to the post," adds Helene, originally from South Wales but now living in west London. "I've since seen him on a number of quiz shows, so it seems I was up against a semi-professional. I got a bottle of champagne as a consolation prize.

"When I got home, I watched the video I'd recorded of the show (yes, video – it was that long ago). Seeing one puzzle, I thought 'I wouldn't have known the answer to that', and then watched myself on screen, answering correctly. It's strange how the mind works."



Since his quiz show debut, Brian has taken part in around 20 radio and TV shows

TELEVISION / Show's host reveals his softer side

Paxman's challenge met by students

By Neil Pugmire
Education reporter

Jeremy Paxman might seem impatient with *University Challenge* contestants but for Abi Eales he couldn't have been nicer.

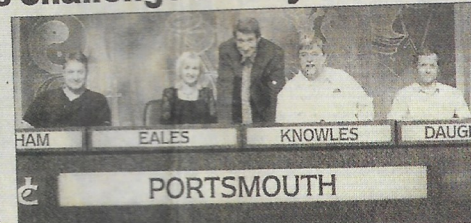
She was among the team of four whose contest against De Montford University, Leicester, is due to be shown on television tomorrow night.

Miss Eales, 21, who is studying for a degree in cultural studies, dispelled the popular view of the show's host as patronising and impatient with contestants.

"He was a bit stern during the contest but he was nice afterwards," she said.

"It was great fun. We were a bit nervous but when we got there it was a real experience."

Abi's fellow contestants were undergraduates Jeremy Knowles and Ian Venham and postgraduate Bryan Daugherty.



Jeremy Paxman with the University of Portsmouth team

The team was selected through auditions within the university and honed its technique by taking part in pub quizzes.

They then had to go through two audition stages with the BBC, which cut down the number of teams from 200 to 50.

and then to the 23 who were to appear on TV. Last year's team from the University of Portsmouth was well beaten by Magdalen College, Oxford – only one contestant managed to answer a starter question successfully.

An Open University team

which featured Cwpl teacher Martin Heighy fared better – amassing a cool 415 points in their cor with Charing Cross Med School.

See how the University of Portsmouth team fare BBC2 tomorrow at 8pm.

Boffin on TV

BRAINY Brian Daugherty is through to the semi-finals of BBC2's *Mastermind*.

The postman got full marks for his specialist subject: the Bernoullis, a family of Swiss mathematicians – but passed on a general question about classic children's TV programme *The Clangers*.

Maths and astronomy whizz Brian, of Bognor delivery office in West Sussex, says: "My colleagues bought me the DVD, so I'll know for next time!"



Genius: Brian dropped just one clanger

KEEP SMILING

Meanwhile, in the late 1990s, Samantha List appeared on ITV's *Supermarket Sweep*. "We arrived at the studio and were made up for TV," she recalls. "We were given instructions, and the need to smile was emphasised. The whole thing was more staged than you'd imagine but, as it was my first time, I had no

'RERUNS OF THE SHOW HAVE BEEN AMUSING AS NEW FRIENDS RECOGNISE US'

expectations and could just enjoy it. The host, Dale Winton, was good at relaxing us. We came second. I was hoping for a win so was disappointed, but we enjoyed the day. And the reruns of the show have been amusing as new friends recognise us and telephone to check."

But finally, as Magnus Magnusson used to say: "I've started so I'll finish", or rather, let's finish where we started. Back in that 1990 episode of *Mastermind*, Brian Daugherty's last question was: which eminent British biologist from a noted family became the first director-general of UNESCO in 1946? Think you know the answer? Find out at the bottom of this page.