



HAMILTON BRADSHAW

James Caan entertains a joker in the Den

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Even former stand-up comic and director of Golfers' Mate Ltd, Dennis Fuller found entering BBC TV's Dragons' Den an intimidating experience

Suffering from nerves was perhaps unusual given that Dennis is a former stand-up comedian who can remember being booed *on* stage by the Royal Marines!

"I was directed to walk in semi-darkness and total silence to find 'the mark' – which is basically a black cross on a black floor! Having found it I squinted into the bright lights at five astute business people who all appeared to be scowling at me. Thank goodness, I had great faith in my product and was confident about my numbers!" said Dennis the inventor of Golfers' Mate.

Dennis was in the Den to find a business partner to help him to produce his new executive golfing tool - the 'Golfers' Mate'. The product combines four essential golfing tools in one: a pitch-mark repairer, a club rest, a ball marker and a pencil sharpener.

"In addition we have also provided a uniquely shaped ball-marker that can carry company logos and will be an effective and in-expensive way of promoting companies," said Dennis, who is also the chairman of Abacus Employment Services.

Deborah and Theo seemed impressed by the pitch but chose not to invest, whilst criticism from Duncan and Peter didn't distract Dennis from delivering an overall confident pitch.

Dennis' stage background served him well when James Caan stepped up to the mark and drilled him on his numbers. However, he held his own and eventually reached a deal. James committed £100,000 for 25% of his company, with the opportunity to reduce his equity to 10% over two years if Dennis achieves his targets.

"As an investor, it is extremely important to not only be able to spot a good opportunity " said James, "but also to be able to spot the people who are really going to make a difference. Golfers' Mate not only shows creativity but innovative thinking which completes the product. But it's not just about the product: I invested in Dennis because he demonstrated the fundamental skills of scaling up businesses."

Dennis was thrilled that James was the Dragon who chose to invest in him, especially given their shared passion and expertise in the recruitment industry.

“The prospect of working with James Caan is extremely exciting for me and everyone involved with Golfers’ Mate. We have a great innovative product and now we have a man who can show us the way – and with our backgrounds, who knows, we may even form a new employment agency,” said Dennis.