

DR. DARTS' NEWSLETTER

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MvG JOINS TEAM WINMAU

On 2nd January my sponsor, the WINMAU Dartboard Co., held a special event to mark the fact the World Number One, three-time World Champion and winner of over fifty televised titles, Michael van Gerwen had joined the WINMAU Team!



As we all know, Michael (pictured here in celebratory mood) has dominated the PDC circuit in recent history and his list of achievements is truly remarkable:

- World number 1 for the last 6 years
- 50+ televised titles (including 3 World Champion titles)
- 75+ non-televised PDC titles
- Six televised 9-dart finishes
- Youngest ever: World number 1, PDC World Champion, major winner and televised 9-dart finish
- Quickest ever rise to PDC world number 1
- Highest ever TV average of 123.40

There is little doubt that Michael will continue to dominate the world of darts for years to come. WINMAU spokesman

Simon Hall said, “We are delighted that Michael has chosen WINMAU for the next part of his journey.”

(MvG image ©2019 Lawrence Lustig/PDC. Used with permission.)

The new WINMAU MvG range has been designed to help players of all standard ‘Find Their Dedication’ and take their game to the next level. Simon Hall added

“Michael has inspired and encouraged our technical and creative departments to produce a truly breathtaking range of darts equipment fitting for the world’s best player. All products embrace the MvG Design philosophy - Visually stunning, performance-led and best-in-class quality.”

And there was more to come as Simon added

“We are also proud to announce another Dutch icon to Team WINMAU – The Dutch Destroyer, Vincent van der Voort. Vincent is a winner of five PDC and



multiple World Darts Federation (WDF) titles. He is best known for his fast and explosive playing style, and we've captured this spirit in the stunning blue-themed van der Voort range.

The 90% tungsten darts have been honed by Vincent to embrace his focussed approach to dart design, and the unique Dynamic Grip provides control at the highest level. We have worked with Vincent to produce a sport-engineered range of Prism flights, a Tour Edition Case and Tour Shirt.

Having Michael and Vincent join WINMAU is a huge honour for us as they are two of darts most distinguished and well liked players on tour and we are relishing working with them to bring in more titles over many years”.

As if this was not exciting enough Simon added

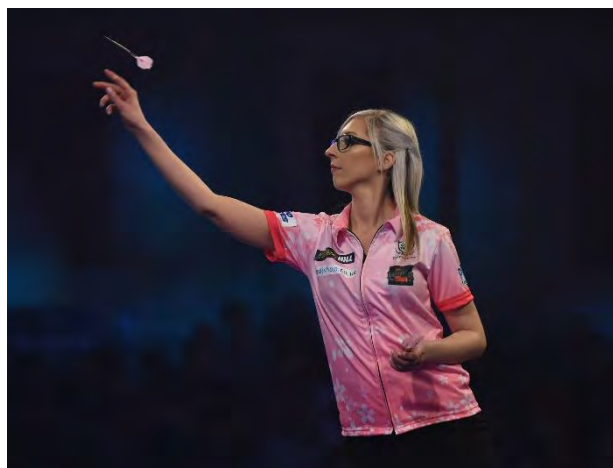
The player additions don't stop there! We have worked with PDC World Grand Prix and Player's Championship winner, Daryl Gurney, to create an exquisite Black Edition of his darts that are finished with two genuine gold-plated rings that represent his two major PDC titles.

Available in steel tip and soft tip, these 90% tungsten darts maintain the outstanding playability of Daryl's originals whilst incorporating our class-leading Onyx coating for the ultimate look and performance.

Congratulations to all the team at WINMAU for securing such high profile Dutch darters at a time when darts is expanding exponentially. I'm also chuffed to bits that I am sponsored by the same company!

FALLON SHERROCK AND 'THE GLASS CEILING'

I thought I would delay writing anything about Fallon Sherrock's magnificent achievement at the PDC William Hill World Darts Championships until now; merely letting the furore abate. Fallon should be (and of course is) justly proud. (Image of Fallon, below © Lawrence Lustig/PDC. Used with permission.)



I've been banging on about giving lady darts players more opportunities for years. Way back in the 1970s and 1980s, although the British Darts Organisation (BDO) ran numerous women's tournaments and, eventually, a Women's World Championships there were hardly any major events that actually pitched the girls against the men. Eventually ladies were allowed to try and qualify for the Embassy/Lakeside World Championships and Deta Hedman *nearly* made it one year, falling at the last hurdle/qualifying event.

In those early days women's darts simply did not receive the coverage like the men's; in fact next to nothing. Thus, with no TV exposure, they attracted little or no major sponsorship,

with the exception of the No. 1. Women's' player Maureen Flowers and perhaps one or two others during the 1980s.

The traditional reason given for women not being able to play as well as the men was always around the 'fact' that they had little time for darts and that they should spend their time making house and having babies. That was never true and in any event would now be politically incorrect. Truth is. The opportunities were never there.

Thankfully, the Professional Darts Corporation (PDC) through its Tournament Director, the late Tommy Cox, took the initiative in 2000 to run a separate women's world championship but due to 'politics' only one competitor, Canada's Gayl King, stood up to the plate. All the others backed down for 'personal reasons' but those in the know knew the real reason...

With no choice but to cancel the women's tournament the PDC did not ditch the idea of having a woman play in the World Championships. They invited Gayl to participate in the PDC Skol World Championship which, until that year, had been composed entirely of men.

In the competition, played out in late December 2000, Gayl faced England's Graeme Stoddart in the first round. To everyone's surprise, except perhaps her own, Gayl took the first set off of the world men's No. 29 and the crowd went wild. I was there and watched the match at the Circus Tavern, Purfleet, Essex. When Gayl took that set off of Graeme the crowd's reaction was deafening and there was, albeit for a short while, a real sense of anticipation that Gayl could do it. According to one newspaper, losing the first set left Graeme 'shell-shocked'. However, Graeme immediately upped his game and eventually won the match by three sets to one.



Gayl left the Circus Tavern stage to a standing ovation, with her head held high and her place in darts history assured.

No win but it was a start.

Gayl was a history-maker that day. National newspapers in Britain, Canada and the USA seized upon the story and for a while Gayl was the subject of a media frenzy. 'King aims to be queen of darts' said the *Ottawa Sun* whilst the *New York Times* described Gayl's imminent appearance in the World Championships as 'a day of liberation for darts'. As usual the British press relished the challenge as *The Times* announced 'Woman with guts shakes up beer bellies' and *The Guardian* weighed in with 'Gayl force hits the bull's-eye.'

But that was *twenty years* ago.

Fallon's victory over 'Super Ted' Evert (Ted shown below, gracious in defeat) is something else. (Image © Lawrence Lustig/PDC. Used with permission.)

Her subsequent win over the 11th seed Mensur Suljovic further emphasised her power and skill and her calm and confident ability to mix it with the men. Sadly for Fallon and all her

fans, Chris Dobey ended her run but the dream hasn't ended.

It's only just begun!



Fallon has come a long way from when I met her briefly a few years ago at the WINMAU World Masters in Hull. She had played poorly by her standards and had been knocked out of the tournament. As she approached the players' room I said, "Unlucky Fallon" to which she replied simply, "I played sh*t".

Not so now Fallon.

She works hard and plays darts with confidence, coping admirably with being a professional darts player *and* a mother and

is now reaping the rewards. Fallon has shown herself to be a force to be reckoned with and, with a place in the UK Open in March and the PDC US Masters assured for next June and as one of the nine 'challengers' in the forthcoming Premier League who knows what this young woman is capable of achieving over the next couple of years.

As one TV commentator shouted when Fallon's winning double 18 went in, "The glass ceiling has been shattered!" Severely cracked maybe but not, in my view, 'shattered'.

Not yet...

What Fallon has done is to show that a woman (the only one *so far* at a World Championship) can take on the men...and win. Her future in darts and darts history is assured but there is much more to come from her and, I sincerely hope, other top lady darters such as England's Lisa Ashton and Japan's Mikuru Suzuki. Lisa of course earned her PDC Tour Card in January so many congratulations to her on being the first female darter to do so.



Other women darters will doubtless follow, inspired by Fallon's success with those very significant victories at the Ally Pally and by Lisa's well-earned Tour Card. (Image of Lisa © 2020 Lawrence Lustig/PDC. Used with permission.)

Remember, it was only a few years ago when if anyone mentioned women playing football or cricket, let alone darts, at a top level, you would have been laughed out of the pub.

NEXT UP - NEW WEBSITE LAUNCH COMPETITION RESULTS...

Thanks to everyone who entered the competition in the December *DDN* sponsored by Red Dragon Sports and WINMAU to celebrate the launch of my new website.

The answer to the question “In what year was my first website launched?” was **1999**. The winning subscribers were Rob Gerrard, Karen Huffman, Kevin Mezza, Malachy Quinn and Paul Williams. All lucky winners have been notified and received their prizes.

But it doesn't end there! Watch out for yet *another* WINMAU competition exclusive to *DDN* subscribers later in this issue.

WHOSE BIOGRAPHY SHOULD BE NEXT? - FEEDBACK

In last month's issue I asked readers “Which darts player(s) do you think should write their autobiography who hasn't already done so?”

Subscriber Alistair M. must surely have given a lot of thought to the question as he nominated over a dozen possibilities namely Martin ‘Wolfie’ Adams, Bob Anderson, Gary Anderson, Steve Beaton, Keith Deller, Alan Glazier, John Gwynne, Ted Hankey, Rod Harrington, Harry Heenan, Mervyn King, Cliff Lazarenko, Rab Smith and Peter Wright.

Of these, I think the majority, if they had ever wished to put pen to paper (or digits to keyboard), would have done so already but it would be good to read their versions of their lives in darts. Harry Heenan died in 2012 and a summary of his career can be found at <https://patrickchaplin.com/2019/09/16/harry-heenan-the-pride-of-scotland/>.

As for Rab Smith, he did publish a small booklet back in the late 70s, early 80s but I'm not sure that would count as an 'autobiography'. However, I understand that he has begun to write his life story for us all to enjoy.

Alistair's inclusion of Martin Adams reminded me of a very brief conversation I had with ‘Wolfie’ not long after I had co-authored Trina Gulliver's autobiography *Golden Girl*. I suggested to him that he/we write his life story but he just looked at me, smiled and replied "Pat. I'm too busy. Perhaps in a couple of years." So that was that. I never pressed the point.

I agree with Alistair that 'Big Cliff' would make interesting reading, and have already stated my case in that respect, and that Gary Anderson might have a good story to tell. However, the person I *can* see considering writing his autobiography following his recent triumph in the PDC William Hills World Darts Championship is ‘Snakebite’ Peter Wright. There's certainly a very ‘colourful’ story to be told.

During the BDO World Championships commentary I heard that Tony ‘Silverback’ O'Shea is writing his autobiography. That's bound to be a great read.

And what about Fallon Sherrock? (Perhaps too soon?)

MEMORIES OF JOCKY WILSON – PART 5

In the final story of the series about Jocky Wilson, as told to freelance journalist Eddie Reid, Scotland's former No. 1., Rab Smith recalls Jocky being a passionate player but not such a good loser...

Jocky was, in Rab Smith's opinion, one of the most passionate players he has ever known. The flipside of this was, that he could also be a very bad loser on occasions. Rab recognised this in him early on and spoke to him about it.



He said, "Jocky, we are all professional players, we all know what we are doing, and we all want to win. Every time we step up to the oche, there is going to be one winner and one loser and, sometimes you aren't going to be the winner. When that happens, there is no point in blaming somebody else because the only man throwing your darts is you, pal."

Jocky accepted this advice. However he still found losing hard to accept.

They were at a major tournament in Wales, again Rab doesn't remember the year or the venue. However, all the top professionals were there including John Lowe, Eric Bristow, Leighton Rees, Alan Glazier etc. and they were all playing as individuals. Rab recalled that it was a very nice venue with VIP Lounge for players and invited guests.

Rab was sitting in company with his friend, John Lowe and some of their guests. Everyone was having a very pleasant time and Rab remembers it as being one of the nicest venues he has attended.

Jocky was still on stage and was playing a very much lower ranked Welsh player. The result of this match was, that the Welsh lad beat Jocky.

The pleasant ambience of the VIP lounge was suddenly shattered as the door was almost swung off its hinges and Jocky made his entrance. He was extremely vocal and his language turned the air blue. Every conversation in the lounge stopped and all heads turned towards this raging tornado which had just entered the room.

Rab concluded, "If he didn't have that passion, then the world wouldn't have had Jocky Wilson!"

Surely never a truer word was spoken.

(My thanks to Rab Smith and his chronicler Eddie Reid for the five insights into the life of Jocky Wilson. All text © 2019/2020 Eddie Reid and Rab Smith. Published with permission.)
(Image: DW/PC Archive. Used with permission.)

YET ANOTHER COMPETITION EXCLUSIVE TO DDN SUBSCRIBERS

Those fabulous folks at WINMAU have offered up a unique prize that can only be won by a DDN subscriber.

And here it is...



...a BLADE5 Dual Core bristle dartboard signed on 2nd January by WINMAU's 'new boy', 'Mighty' Michael van Gerwen, Bobby George, Colin Lloyd, Paul Nicholson and Mark Webster.

To stand a chance of winning this unique prize simply answer the following question:

“What is the name of MvG-designed WINMAU darts?”

Is it (a) Gerwensport (b) Flackhall Demons or (c) Adrenalin? (Clue: See Page 1)

To enter send your answer together with your name, mailing address and the single capital letter that you will find in the subject line of the covering e-mail to this issue to me at patrick.chaplin@btinternet.com. The closing date is **noon on Wednesday 26th February**.

PLEASE NOTE THAT ANY ENTRIES LACKING ANY OF THIS INFORMATION WILL BE DECLARED VOID.

All personal data provided by entrants to this competition will be deleted/destroyed immediately after the winner has been chosen.

DARTS ON TV AND FILM - FEEDBACK

In last month's issue I asked readers if they could remember the name of the website that listed TV series/episodes and films that featured darts and dartboards. This could be as part of the story or, for example, where viewers 'spotted' a dartboard as part of the set or, for example, where simply hanging on the wall in a pub, house of flat, like *Coronation Street* or *Cheers*. Almost immediately upon receipt of that issue of DDN Ed Helenius of Brooklyn, New York contacted me. Ed wrote

Hi Patrick and Happy New Year. I just finished reading Issue 118 of DDN and saw your request for information about a US website with a listing of movies and TV shows with darts in them. I believe that site was Crow's Darts (<http://www.crowsdarts.com/>) and the specific

page is (<http://www.crowdsdarts.com/movies/movies.html>). The site hasn't been active for several years, but the movie info (and a lot more besides) is still there.

Of course! Thanks Ed. I'm sure that website was one of the first darts-related websites I ever visited. I was fascinated by its content and downloaded (or 'printed it off' as we said back then) the list of TV/film darts' 'appearances'.

MRS. JOAN WORLAND

Although the name Joan Worland may not mean anything to you I was sad to learn of her passing on 30th December last year. Joan was one of the daughters of the legendary **Joe Hitchcock** probably the best exhibition darts players of the post-war years.

I often spoke to Joan on the phone about her father and his exploits but did not meet her until July 2014 (pictured right). Joan talked enthusiastically about her dad and his life. I learned so much from her and hope someday to produce a short biography of Joe based on Joan's memories and my earlier research. RIP Joan.



AND FINALLY...

It is with a degree of sadness that I learned recently that, from the February issue (#566), *Darts World* magazine will no longer be published in magazine format. However, it will continue online. I have written occasional pieces for *Darts World* since 1985 and *The Last Word* column every month for four years or more. I found out about the cessation of the paper format *by reading the magazine!*

I have therefore decided that my February *Last Word* will be my last for *Darts World* and have advised the editor accordingly.

MY RESEARCH IS SPONSORED BY

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