

DARTS HISTORY

(aka Dr. Darts' Newsletter)

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JANANI BECOMES THE FIRST INDIAN LADY TO PLAY IN THE PDC WOMEN'S SERIES



In September I received an email from Indian ladies' player Janani Janakiraman in which she wrote:

Hi Patrick.

Hopefully you remember me. This is Janani Janakiraman from India, darts player. We interacted via email a really long time ago.

How are you? I have been a regular reader of your monthly newsletters. They are full of interesting information. Ashfaque Sayed suggested that I mail you a little bit about myself and the PDC Women's Series. He has been a great friend and advisor for me all this time, always pushing me into playing more.

I first met Jan's 'advisor', Ashfaque Sayed, an Indian darts champion, at the PDC World Darts Championships at Alexandra Palace, (the 'Ally Pally') in 2007. We have kept in regular touch ever since and it was Ashfaque who brought my attention to Janani over a decade ago stating that he believed that she had/has the potential to do well in top tournaments. Now living in Germany gives her the opportunity to experience the Europe circuit.

What follows is Jan's exclusive report of her experiences in the recent Women's Series:

After playing darts for four years from 2010, [see right] starting with UK super leagues and counties and back in India, winning three national titles, I took a big break of almost five years as I had a son and had to look after him. After this huge gap I wanted to get back on the dartboard and I tried as much as I could because I couldn't practice like before, with my concentration all over the place.



But I still did manage, leaving my son with my parents and travelling to Kolkata for the Indian Open (reaching the semis) and to Kuala Lumpur for Malaysian Open (reaching the top 16). And in COVID my playing pivoted to online darts.

Then an opportunity came knocking for my husband. He had an option of transferring to his company's Germany office. We took it since we already knew German language and my son was just about to start school. After settling into our new home, I looked for a team to play nearby and found, via social media, "IQ darters" with whom I started training.

When I heard that the Professional Darts Corporation (PDC) was doing a women's series in Hildesheim (about three hours away from my home) I knew I could not miss this opportunity. I was aware that I am no way in the same league as the others but I knew this would be a great way of boosting my confidence and my dedication to training more and more for other tournaments like the World Darts Federation's Dutch Open, Luxembourg Open and German Open, all of which I plan to play in next year.

At the PDC series I never imagined they would select me for the first rounds streaming stage. Obviously, me and my opponent Daniela Dambek, a German player, (her first time too in a big event like this) were both extremely nervous. We decided we will do our best. I won it just 4-3. It was not a great game for us. I did so much better in the next round against Aileen de Graaf, got two legs off of her (of course she showed her real mettle in her winning legs). My average was much improved against earlier matches at 62.73 while Aileen's was 63.86.

In the next event too, I won through the first round but lost in the second.

The second day was tough. As I had both my first rounds against big players, losing 4-1 to Mikuru Suzuki [Japan] and Norway's Iselin Hauen, 4-0. But being the first Indian women into the PDC definitely got me noticed though.

Overall, a good weekend as I spoke to many new darters, made friends and made 100 pounds. More than anything this weekend taught me that I need to strive harder and harder at this great passion of mine if I am ever to go in the big leagues or take my place next to the big-named players.

In my view, having Ashfaque as her mentor, being able now to learn more about her trade in Europe *and* hitting a great, improved average against Aileen de Graaf recently, all indicates to me that Janani has the potential to go much further in the sport she loves.

(Match information courtesy of <https://mastercaller.com/players/janani-janakiraman> and the Professional Darts Corporation (PDC).)

TONY BROWN – 1945-2022 – A TRIBUTE

It is becoming more and more common that I hear news of yet another darts star of the past, who I admired and watched on TV back in the day has passed away.



On this occasion I discovered that England and Kent's Tony Brown died on 22nd September, when his daughter Kelly announced the sad news to members of the Darts of the Past Facebook page. (The image of Tony, left, shows him in Embassy action. Courtesy of DW/PC Archive.) Tributes poured in to Kelly via Darts from the Past. These are just a few of those received.

Of his many friends from his darts past, Roger Nickson said

'Super guy. So unassuming, always very professional and one of the true greats of the day... Tony used to travel up from Dover every Monday night to play in the London Super League. He will always be remembered by us all from the 70s and 80s as one of the true greats of the game of darts. R.I.P.'

Marie George wrote

So, so sorry to hear of your loss. Bobby has fond memories of him back in the day. He says you could always rely on Tony to have something in his medicine bag to cure a headache or sore throat etc. RIP Tony xxx

David Lennard, son of Bill Lennard, the 1976 *News of the World* champion said

'So sorry for your loss Kelly. My dad knew your dad well and they played together for England.'

Whilst the Swedish darts star Stefan Lord added

'So sorry to hear that. Great friend and partner. RIP'

Steve Beaton, the 1996 World Champion wrote

'Sorry to hear Tony has passed away Kelly. He was a lovely man. I played him a few times and we always had a laugh. RIP my friend.'

Dave Babb said

'So very sorry to hear of Tony's passing. A great sportsman and a gentleman. Always a cheerful adversary with lots of good advice. My condolences to all his family and friends. He will be sadly missed by us old darters. RIP Tony.'

Capped for England on twenty-three occasions, a Kent County player for eleven years, a member of the famous Marlboro Team of Champions (Tony is shown below depicted in a Marlboro beer mat) and a top professional darts player for eight years, darts folklore will have us believe that Tony Brown, who reached the semi-finals of the Embassy World Professional Darts Championship on no less than four occasions, simply gave up darts in 1984 and disappeared from the scene.



In 2011 I caught up with Tony and he spoke to me about his amazing career and the real reason he left the sport he loved, apparently, so suddenly.

Tony was born in Enfield, North London on 1st April 1945 and moved to Dover with his parents Kenneth and Pauline in 1956 when they became licensees at *The Falcon* public house in the town. It was there that eleven-year-old Tony first played the game that he would eventually master.

In those early days Tony was inspired by the darting skills of two local players, Arthur Young and Tony Fox and learning from these players certainly paid dividends. In 1973 Tony was selected to play in a Kent 'North versus South' representative match and as a result of participating in that tournament he earned a place in his County side. In his first season playing county darts Tony won half of his matches but in the following year he won all of his games which earned him a call-up for the England squad.

Tony's big break came in 1977. He told me, "Jim Mangan, who was managing Eric Bristow at the time, asked me if I would join Eric and John Lowe in the Queen's Silver Jubilee Triples." Tony worked in the paper industry but wanted to take up Mangan's offer so asked his employer for time off which was refused. "So," said Tony, "I gave in my notice and took a chance on becoming a professional."



The team of Tony, Eric and John won the Triples tournament and success for Tony followed success. That same year (1977) Tony appeared on television for the first time when he appeared on Yorkshire TV's *The Indoor League* and won the men's darts trophy beating David 'Rocky' Jones in the final.

In 1979 Tony won the British Open (beating Brian Langworth in the final), the *Darts World Tons Trophy*, was a member of the World Cup winning team in Las Vegas

(other members being John, Eric and Bill Lennard), beat Alan Evans during England's win over Wales in the Nations Cup and reached the semi-final of the Embassy World Professional Darts Championship. The image, above, left, shows BDO and Kent legend, Sam Hawkins presenting Tony with another trophy he won that year; the Kent Open Singles. (Image copyright unknown: DWPC Archive)

Tony reached the Embassy World Darts Championships on no less than seven occasions. He appeared in the inaugural Embassy in 1978 where he was beaten in the first round 6-3 (in legs) by Australia's Tim Brown. (No relation. Image, right, © DW/PC Archive.)

In 1979 Tony beat Wales' Ceri Morgan 2-0 (in sets) and moved into the quarter finals where he beat England colleague, Alan Glazier, 3-2, and then moved in his first semi-final. Unfortunately, England's John Lowe was too good for him on that occasion, beating Tony by 3-2.

In 1980 Tony beat the Australian star, Terry O'Dea, 2-0 in the second round, then moved on to the quarter-final where he beat England's Bill Lennard 3-0. Tony moved into his second semi-final where his progress was stopped by Eric Bristow 4-3. Tony told me back in 2011, that one of his finest memories of his career in professional darts was when he beat Cliff Lazarenko into third place in the 3rd/4th playoff that year.

In the 1981 Embassy Tony made it to the semi-final for the third time by beating England's Paul Gosling 2-1 in the first round, Belgium's Luc Marreel (2-0) in the second, then Scotland's Jocky Wilson 4-2 in the quarter final by beating Tony but was then defeated 4-1 by John Lowe. Surprisingly, Tony met Cliff Lazarenko again in the 3rd/4th playoff. Cliff was able to gain his revenge 2-1.



Tony returned in 1982 but his stay was a little shorter. He beat the USA darts ace, John Kramer 2-0 but found another USA player, David Miller waiting for him in the second round who beat Tony 2-0.

In 1983 Tony was victorious over his England colleague, Bobby George, by 2-0 in the first round. He then met yet another USA player in Jerry Umberger who Tony dispatched by 3-0. In the quarter final Tony met

Sweden's Stefan Lord and won 4-1, thus leading to fourth semi-final where the Crafty Cockney awaited him.

Eric defeated Tony by 5-1. In the 3rd/4th place play off, Tony lost to Jocky Wilson 2-0.

Tony's last appearance in the Embassy was 1984 when he was beaten in the first round by John Lowe. He had made seven consecutive appearances at the Embassy (1978-1984) and made it to four semi-finals. Quite a record.

During that same year Tony decided to call it a day and give up professional darts. He told me in 2011

"I wanted to get back into the paper industry before I was too old. Some people say I quit too early. I just did what I wanted to do at the time. I have no regrets."

Tony returned to darts after an 18-year break. It was at his mother's wake. He told me

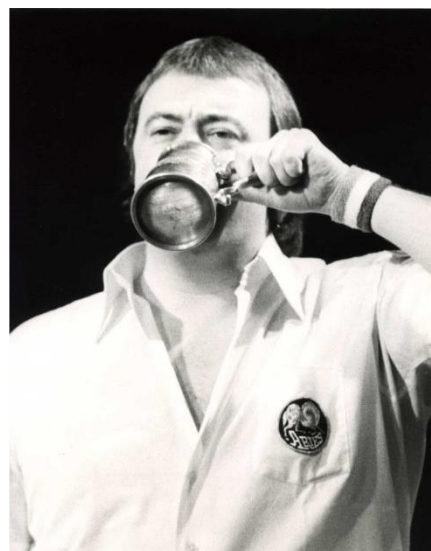
"I was dragged on to the oche late in the evening. I was very drunk but managed to hit a 180 and a 134 finish with old brass pub darts."

By 2011, when I interviewed him, Tony had retired from the paper industry and played regularly for the Diamond Hotel, Dover. I asked him how he thought he would fare against the top players of today and he replied

"I would certainly have enjoyed competing with them when I was in my prime."

Does he have one over-riding special memory of his darting life? Yes, he does and it dates back to his earliest days as a Kent County player. Tony told me:

"The one I will always remember is when Tom Barrett, who won the News of the World in 1964 and 1965, came and sat beside me for a chat after I had just played my first County game. Although I had scored quite well my finishing let me down and I was feeling a bit despondent. Tom reassured me and bucked me up and I remember thinking what a gentleman he was as well as a great champion."



Cheers Tony. You too were a great champion and a credit to the sport of darts. RIP.

THE 150th ISSUE

Thank you to everyone who congratulated me for reaching 150. (That's 150 DDN/DH issues, not my age!) Due to restriction of space, it is only possible to print only a few of those kind responses. For example, Brian H. wrote

Hi Patrick. Thank you for yet another cracking read....and congratulations on the 150th issue! I can't remember when I first signed up to receive your newsletter but I've looked forward to it every month and have never been disappointed! Hope you have the energy to reach 200!

Your digging to find out as much as possible about John James Henderson for his family is a great example of what I love about DDN. Without your efforts John's story would have been

incomplete. He and many others deserve their achievements to be remembered and be the source of family pride. You have helped so many over the years and I thank you for bringing these little histories to life. Looking forward to October's already!

And from Dartmouth, Nova Scotia, Canada, Doug Haney:

Patrick. Congratulations on your 150th issue. What a moment for you to be proud of. What you have been doing all those years and how much your readers have been able to enjoy your informative dart information. I for one look forward to your reports and I can honestly say I learn something more every time I read them. Patrick, keep up the good work and thank you for the time and effort you put into each and every issue. Your work is truly amazing and appreciated by so many of your followers.

From Germany, Martin Gehrke, wrote

Dear Patrick, Congratulations to your 150th issue. I appreciate your newsletters very much and thank you for them. Please keep on. Glück auf! 🎯

Thanks to you all. Thanks too for everyone who entered the 150th Anniversary competition in which the answer was the 'WORTHINGTON CHAMPION OF CHAMPIONS'. The winner, from Scotland, has been notified of his success.

THE QUEEN – AND DARTS

From 'sunny Malta', Dr. Eddie Norman wrote to me about #150 issue and, like millions of us across the world, mourned the death of Her Majesty The Queen:

Hi Patrick. Thank you very much for the great 150th. edition of Darts History which I opened and read this morning [9th September]. It was a great read and a great souvenir edition. You must have put so much work into that edition.

I also woke up to the sad news of the Queen's passing. I have fondest memories of The Queen and her interest in the sport of darts, having been privileged with a personal interview with my brother Peter, to Buckingham Palace and over coffee discussing the sport of darts. Her Majesty listened with interest to us.

I remember saying to the Queen that the House of Darts International had just completed a very large export order to Kampala in Uganda and she replied, "I hope that will help bring 'peace and prosperity' to that troubled country."

In 1985 she mentioned, as you know, our darts firm on her Christmas Day Broadcast.

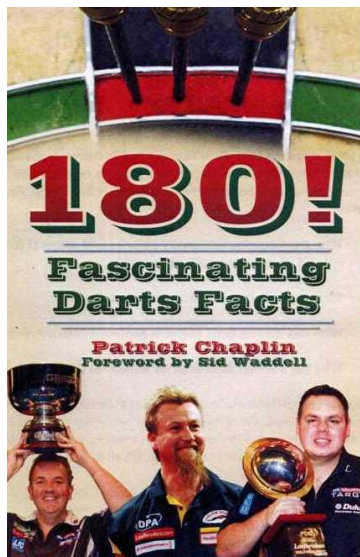
[The 'mention' made by Her Majesty was The House of Darts International winning The Queen's Award for Export Achievement earlier that year.]

I have driven through those gates at Buckingham Palace four times, never ever imagining that I would even drive through once.

So, like millions of others, a sad day as the Queen passed away. But Her Majesty did know about the sport of darts we all love and it was a privilege in life to have met her.

Thanks Eddie. How wonderful to have met our Queen on **four** occasions!

I had heard that the Queen did enjoy darts. In my book *180! – Fascinating Darts Facts* (The History Press, 2012, still available) I recorded that



In December 2007 at the BBC Sports Personality of the Year awards, Her Majesty the Queen's grand-daughter, Zara Phillips, revealed to Phil 'The Power' Taylor the little-known fact that HM the Queen followed televised darts champions.

The Sun newspaper dubbed Her Majesty 'Liz "The Real Power" Windsor' and commented

'Not since King Harold came a cropper at Hastings in 1066 has a British monarch been said to have had an eye for the arrers.'

Back in 2007, Prince Charles (now, of course, King Charles III) was spotted playing darts at a pub in Cumbria. One Sunday broadsheet reported that it was 'A terrible shame', adding 'apparently his mother had such high hopes for him.'

Undeterred by such comments, in March that same year, the then heir apparent spoke at Clarence House on the fifth anniversary of the establishment of his campaign to preserve rural pubs, 'Pub is the Hub'. Prince Charles told those present

'Whatever a gastropub is, it seems to be threatening the future of pub darts which is rather worrying. My youngest son [Harry] is a great deal better than I am [at darts] and you can guess why, but I am doing my best to keep the darts tradition going.'

HAVE I GOT NEWS FOR YOU

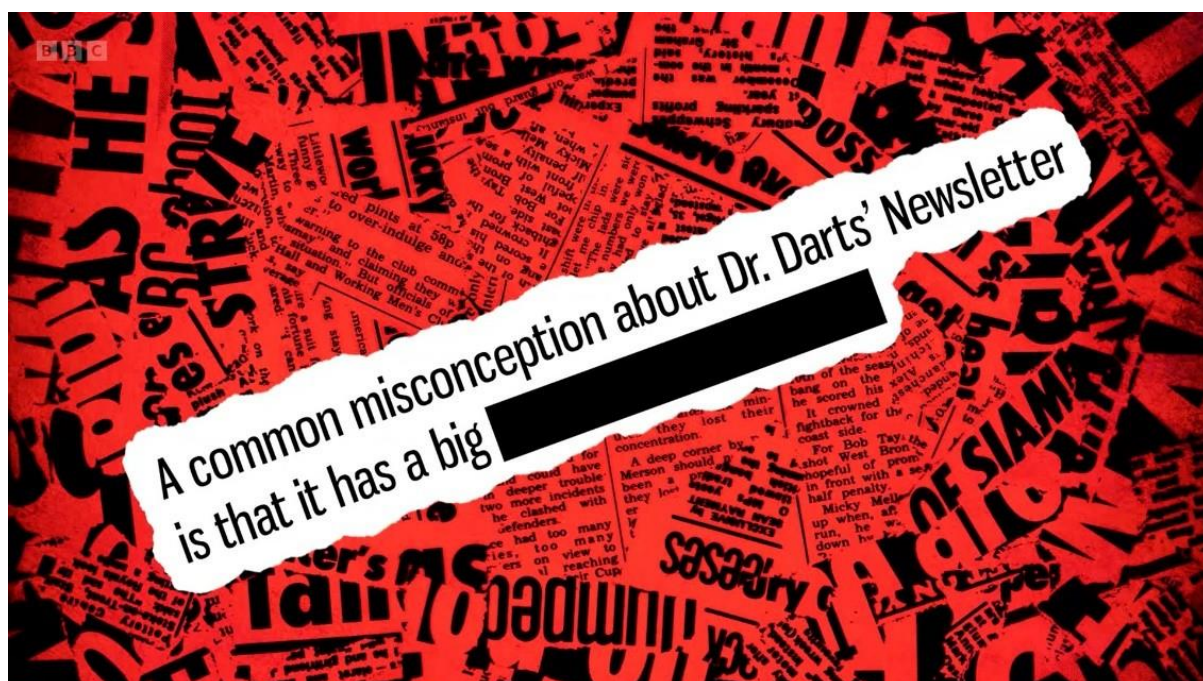
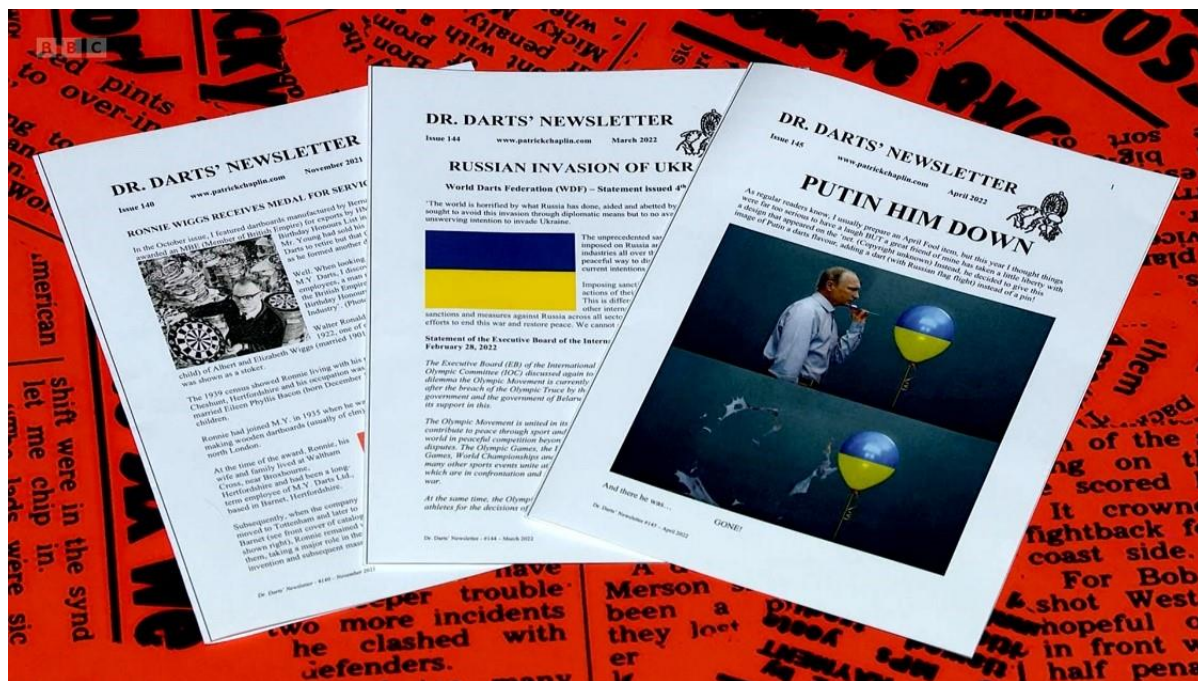
In the last week of September, I was contacted by the BBC telling me that *Dr. Darts' Newsletter* was going to be featured in the satirical show *Have I Got News for You*, in the 'Guest Publication' segment but subject of course to making it to the final cut.



AND IT DID!

My friend David King produced the excellent ‘poster’ (above) which he published on his websites to promote the appearance.

In the edition broadcast on BBC1 on Friday 7th October, *DDN* **was** featured and these ‘screen grabs’ were prepared for me by another friend, *DDN/DH* subscriber and fellow Pub History Society member, Chris Murray.



All the panel had to do was fill in the blank.

Talking of HIGNFY, it was only a few months ago that the Pub History Society's journal *Pub History* (compiled and edited by Chris Murray) was mentioned in the 'Guest Publication' segment.

FROM BRATISLAVA, SLOVAKIA, MICHAEL BENNETT WRITES

Dear Patrick. Thank you for the latest issue, which I very much enjoyed reading, as usual. Congratulations on the 150th edition! My condolences at the loss of your friend Arthur Taylor. And indeed, at the passing of HM the Queen. It does seem like the end of an era.

Not for the first time, your mentions of other publications have led me to seek them out. Thank you. I just ordered an old copy of Mr Taylor's Guinness Book of Pub Games!

I was interested to note the fact that local rules were in use in the early stages of the News of the World. It made me wonder what my dear old grandpa would have played in his area (Stanmore). I remember him recounting to me, a young child at the time, of how he reached the semi-finals of some stage or other of the NoW, and how his doubles failed him! The only photo I have of him related to darts - an old black and white snap - clearly shows (to my eyes) that they were playing 301 double in, but I would be fairly certain the photo was from some local league or competition, not the NoW. It does amaze me how they played in a jacket and tie in those days! It does seem that 301 double in was very much a staple in days of yore, and is relatively uncommon nowadays (at least in my limited experience).

I remember being in a pub in Southam about 25 years ago, stopping off on the way up from Maidenhead to Manchester to study, and playing my dad at a game of 301. We chalked it up, and got going with a flying start, and the old locals who were sat around immediately cried out, "Double start!" When I explained that my dad (and me for that matter) would be here all day if we did that, they understood! I then played a young local lad and he wiped the floor with me. Fond memories of days gone by.

I am pleased to say that a nice darts pub in Maidenhead, the community-owned Craufurd Arms, still had its dartboard up the last time I visited, and had even upgraded to an electric scoreboard!

MY RESEARCH IS SPONSORED BY



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