

DARTS HISTORY

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JAMIE 'BRAVEDART' HARVEY

Once again, it is time to pay tribute to another darts hero who has passed away. On this occasion it is Scotland's Jamie Harvey. His passing was announced on the Professional Darts Corporation website thus:

'The PDC sends its condolences to the family and friends of Jamie Harvey, who passed away on Thursday morning [4th September] aged 70.'

Scottish ace Harvey was one of the founding players of the World Darts Council - which later became the PDC - and reached the semi-finals of the 1995/96 World Championship in one of 13 successive Circus Tavern appearances.

Harvey was also a World Matchplay semi-finalist in 1996 in one of a dozen challenges at the Winter Gardens, while he also played in the World Grand Prix, UK Open and Las Vegas Desert Classic during his career.



His only PDC ranked title came at the 2000 Antwerp Open, where he defeated Roland Scholten in the final, while he was on the receiving end of a nine-darter from Phil Taylor at the 2008 UK Open in what proved to be his final televised match before retiring the following year.

James Harvey, Jamie's son, announced that he *"passed away peacefully at home surrounded by all his loved ones."*

Harvey had initially broken through at the 1983 World Masters event, and played in the BDO World Championship twice before the WDC's breakaway in 1993.'

[The above text is reproduced and the image, above right, showing Jamie playing in the 2005 World Matchplay, are both © PDC and reproduced here with permission.]

Career highlights:



The WINMAU World Masters 1983 was held at The Rainbow Suite, Kensington, London W8 on 9th-10th December. The short biography in the programme told darts fans that Jamie had won the Renfrewshire Singles that year and

'Now wants to prove himself against the best players – and he will certainly get his chance in the Winmau.'

Jamie was drawn in Group 9 of the huge field for the Masters. He won his first game against Holland's Leo De-Dude, 2-0 and was drawn against England's Mike Gregory in that Group's final and lost to him 2-0. (Gregory was then to lose the final to Eric Bristow.)

Jamie's first appearance in the Embassy World Championships was at the Lakeside in 1992. He beat Finland's Heikki Hermunen 3-0 (average 27.05) in the first round but then fell 3-2 in the second round to England's Kevin Kenny (av. 29.95), (Image right: PC Archive) Jamie with an average of 29.65. Kevin and Jamie were to remain friends until Jamie's death.



In January 1993 Jamie returned to Lakeside. He had caused a stir the previous year when he was bag-piped on and off the stage. He repeated the piping in the second year although he decided not to go one further and wear a kilt. A full-page article in the 1993 world championship programme was devoted to Jamie's life and his appearance the previous year in which he explained:

"Tartan trousers, yes, but a kilt, no. I once wore a kilt for half-an-hour at a darts marathon at my local. It was long enough. Everybody tried to lift it up all the time."

He added:

"After the last Embassy, the BBC commentator, Tony Green, said that he would get me on Bullseye if I wore a kilt. I said no. But Tony worked me on to Bullseye anyway. I enjoyed it. I scored well..."

The programme article told readers that Jamie was 37, came from Barrhead, Renfrewshire, Scotland, and was a joiner's mate. (No. Not a joiner's mate a *joiner's* mate; someone who joins underground cables together for a living.) He had been throwing darts casually for some time and said that it was watching the inaugural Embassy World Championship in 1978 that had him hooked on darts.

In 1981 Jamie started playing serious darts becoming a regular at the *Flying Horse*, Barrhead, supported by the owner, David Dale, who helped pay for trips to matches, until it eventually closed.

In addition, Jamie had a successful career playing for Scotland. According to the Scottish Darts Association (SDA) website he made eighteen appearances for his country and won on ten occasions.

Although Jamie never lifted an individual national or international title until 2000, he was a highly successful pairs player, in 1992 winning pairs competitions in Finland, Denmark, Canada and Jersey and, in Los Angeles that year, winning the cricket doubles with England's Mike Gregory. Jamie told me:

"It was my second year in the BDO Embassy World Championship finals and on 24th October 1992 I had just won the Europe Cup VIII Pairs in Kerava, Finland with another Scots player Ayrshire's Ronnie Sharp. We had beaten the Northern Ireland pairing of Geoff Wylie and Mitchell Crooks 4-0 in the quarter final and beat Phil Taylor and Alan Warriner 4-2 in the semi-final.



In the final we were up against two Finnish boys (Kexi Heinaharju [*pictured left* © Steve Daszko/*Darts World*] and Aulis Nissenen) and Ronnie and I soon found ourselves 2-0 down. However, we pulled it back to 3-3 and we won the final 4-3. I think it was the first time Scotland had won that title in the Europe Cup.

[**Note:** *Darts World* (December 1992, Issue 241, page 14) confirmed that 'Both of England's pairs teams failed to survive the semi-finals and were spectators when Jamie Harvey and Ronnie Sharp

became the first Scotsmen to take the title.']

There were a lot of things brewing with the professional players and the BDO. I was not a full-time professional so this was all new to me. What happened in the next few years changed my life and the history of darts."

Jamie told me in 2010:

"The run-up to the 1992/93 Embassy World Championship was proving to be tough. The professionals needed the TV; *any* TV. If you were regularly on TV, you got more work doing exhibitions which is the darts players' main source of income. Anything you won at tournaments was a bonus.

Over the years before the ban [*following 'The Split'*] the BDO had been losing a lot of TV events. TV was reduced to maybe three events. Now, for a professional, that was very bad news and meant that we would lose a lot of money in the long run, which I was to find out in the forthcoming years. The pros decided to have their own event; hence the WDC. Sky Sport helped us. We were told by the BDO not to do it or we would be banned."

Jamie told me, "The rest is history" but he then added about his second Embassy:

"Before I played my first round game at the 1993 World Championships, I was pulled to one side in the toilet by a BDO official. I don't remember the officials' name but he was one of the top officials at the time. Just before my game with Mike Gregory on stage, he actually

followed me into the toilet to tell me I would be banned. My reply to this man was “I got here at the Embassy through me playing darts. My money had paid to get there over the years and nobody was going to tell me what to do. After the Embassy, to this day, I never ever received a letter from the BDO stating I was banned.”

As in the previous year Jamie was piped on to the Lakeside stage by piper Angus Ingram (Image, right. The PC Archive) for the 1993 Embassy World Championship for the first-round match against the on-form, Mike Gregory. Jamie was beaten 3-0 by Mike (Mike's average 31.59; Jamie's 28.97.) Jamie did not say afterwards if his earlier conversation with the official affected his performance. I doubt it.



Throughout 1993 the effects of ‘The Split’ took effect and then, as one of the fourteen ‘rebels,’ Jamie joined the line-up for the first World Darts Council (WDC) world championships (28th December 1993 to 2nd January 1994) at The Circus Tavern, Purfleet, Essex.

Erroneously called a *joiner's* mate, in the Skol World Championship programme, Jamie was cited as being ‘the past winner of the Yorkshire Classic and the Isle of Man Open, semi-finalist in the Singles in the 1991 World Cup in Holland and Scottish Masters winner in 1992.’

In that inaugural WDC World Championship, in the knockout Group Stages, Jamie was pitched against American Jim Watkins, the American Darts Organization (ADO) 1993 National Champion. Jim beat Jamie 3-2.

In total, Jamie was to appear in thirteen WDC/PDC world finals at the *Circus Tavern* (not to forget his two appearances in the Embassy). His best performance at Purfleet came in 1995/96 when he reached the semi-finals. Having made it through the Group stages, Jamie met Larry Butler (USA) in the quarter finals, Jamie achieving a 4-0 whitewash. In the semi-finals he met England's Dennis Priestley on form; Jamie going down at 5-1.

That same year he made it to the semi-finals in the World Matchplay at Blackpool. John Gwynne reporting for *Darts World* (#286, September 1996) wrote:

‘Scot Jamie Harvey put paid to their chances [Peter Manley and Phil Gilman] of stardom this time around, beating Gilman 8-5 in the First Round and Manley 8-3 in the last sixteen. He also took care of Dennis Smith in the quarter-final before going down 13-9 to [Peter] Evison [the eventual champion] in the last four.’

Of his appearance in the World Matchplay at the Winter Gardens, Blackpool, on 25th July 2005, Jamie was drawn against Phil ‘The Power’ Taylor in the first round. According to one report, Jamie milked his walk on for all it was worth, taking about five minutes to reach the stage, and then hit single 1, treble 1 and another single 1 “FIIIIIVE!” with his first three darts.

Jamie went down to Taylor 10-4 but it was no disgrace especially when you may recall that Taylor averaged 102.08 against Jamie: the highest average in that first round.

Victory in the Antwerp Open

Darts World (issue #331, July 2000) reported briefly on Jamie's victory in the Antwerp Open:

'Battling through an entry of 1,744 players, Scotland's Jamie 'Bravedart' Harvey took the Men's Singles title... The five-set final of this 12-hour marathon tournament saw Harvey face Holland's Roland Scholten.'



To reach that final, and his first singles major tournament title, Jamie beat Belgium's Tanguy Borra (4-3) in the last 64, then England's Rod Harrington in the last sixteen (4-2) and in the quarter-finals, England's Nigel Justice (5-1). *Darts World* completed the story:

'In the semi-finals Jamie Harvey beat England's Shayne Burgess 2-0 and Roland Scholten beat England's Steve Beaton 2-0. The match went the full distance with Harvey taking his chances and winning 3-2 (2-3, 3-1, 3-2, 1-3, 3-1).' (Image, left, © *Darts World*/PC Archive)

'Bravedart' (for a short time back in the early PDC days was nicknamed 'The Tartan Terror' by *The Sun*) was on the receiving end of a nine-darter from Phil Taylor at the 2008 UK Open in what proved to be his final televised darts match before retiring the following year.

I asked James Hope, a long-time subscriber to *Darts History*, about Jamie and he replied

"I have a few memories of Jamie. Whenever I met him at tournaments, international matches, charity darts events, and exhibition games, he was a larger-than-life character who enjoyed a good laugh. He was a very funny man."

I first met the great man back in the '80s when I was 20 years old through my good friend Alistair Forrester and he was some player back then. Jamie was a very friendly person who whenever I met him, he always gave me a friendly handshake as well as advice about my darts playing.

The last time I saw Jamie was in 2011 at a charity darts event at the Harley's Sky Bar in Rutherglen, near Glasgow. He was unwell after having his voicebox removed after a cancer operation but he still had that wicked sense of humour. The last words he said to me were "Thank you for coming and supporting the event, James. Keep on darting son."

R.I.P Jamie and thanks for the memories Bravedart.'

On hearing of Jamie's passing, Kevin Kenny, Jamie's long-time friend (and the man who knocked Jamie out of the Embassy in the second round in 1992) wrote in *UK Arrows* that

'Jamie was full of humour, full of life, a character like no other, and above all, a gentleman of darts. I'm blessed to have shared those memories with him. Rest in peace, my friend. You'll never be forgotten.'

Upon hearing the news of Jamie's passing, fans and professionals posted their comments, including friend and former rival, Alan Warriner-Little, (Pictured, below, right, in 1993. Image: *Darts World*/PC Archive) paid his tribute by posting:

"Sad Day. RIP Jamie Harvey. Myself, Eric [Bristow] and Mace [Chris Mason] spent a lot of time together back in the day, usually in the bars around the world it has to be said. Will miss you Pal."

Many, many, fans posted, all positive thoughts and memories of 'Bravedart,' all reflecting on Jamie as a person and of his being one of the 'rebels,' who helped create the darts world we know today.

They posted such tributes as "Jamie was a true legend who helped build the sport from the ground up. His legacy will live on," "His personality and legacy were vital to the game we get to enjoy today," and remembering him as "[A] cracking entertainer back in the day," and as "[S]uch a great player and a really nice man."



On 5th September Peter Casey, a member of the Darts From The Past blog, wrote of his friend a very poignant memorial which I think is an appropriate way of concluding this tribute to Jamie. Peter wrote:

'Yesterday was a very sad day for all of us in the darts family. We lost not only a true pioneer of the game but also a dear friend. Jamie Harvey R.I.P. was one of the players who helped transform darts from the county stage into the professional sport we know today.'

Jamie was a gentleman through and through — full of character, humour, and incredible talent. I'll never forget 1984 at the Rainbow Suite in London, watching him practice in his blue and white shirt with The Flying Horse, Barrhead, on the back. He stepped up and hit five 140s on the trot without saying a word.

When I asked him who he fancied to win the tournament, I said "Eric," and he replied instantly, with that trademark confidence: "ME!" and he meant it. Jamie carried on practicing, hitting that sixty with effortless ease.

By the mid-90s, he had become close friends with Eric Bristow — and if Eric befriended anyone, you knew that player was pure class.

Scotland has produced many greats, but few will be remembered quite like Jamie "Bravedart" Harvey. He was someone you never heard a bad word about, respected on the oche, and loved by everyone who knew him.

Another pioneer of that golden era has left us, but Jamie will most certainly never be forgotten. Rest in peace, Jamie. You changed the game and inspired us all."

I add my sincere condolences to Jamie's family and friends on their loss.

ANDRE DECLERQ – FEEDBACK

James Hope also emailed me with his memories of Belgium's Andre Declerq who I mentioned in #186. James told me:

'Hi Patrick. Just read the excellent newsletter and I well remember Andre Declerq. I watched him in the 1980 Unipart World Team tournament and he played for Belgium alongside Luc Marreel and Daniel Serie. He was the oldest player in the tournament at 72 and he was very good on the 19s as I recall.'

PUBS NAMED *THE DART INN*



Thanks to Rob Gerrard who replied to my request in #186, for any other pubs, other than the one in Norwich, Norfolk, named *The Dart Inn*. He pointed me in the direction of the Closed Pubs website and to *The Dart* (Image © Ian Chapman) on the corner of Longfellow Street and Lodge Lane (# 39 Lodge Lane, Liverpool 18).

Rob added:

'The Dart closed many years ago and is now being converted to flats.'

FEEDBACK – EARLY DARTS IN GERMANY

As you know, the lead feature in the September issue (#186) was a detailed article about early days of darts in Germany. James King of the Europe Expats Darts Federation certainly enjoyed it, writing

Dear Patrick. Thank you very much for September Darts History a fantastic read as always, and so much hard work on your part. May I say your article on the early darts history in Germany was a fascinating read. We have always thought that there was a life before the PDC darts in Europe, and Germany in particular, and it was great to read how Joe Scott and Eddie Norman helped to get darts off the ground.

Where would darts be today in Germany without the founders of the sport like Joe and Eddie who did so much so many years ago before big money entered the sport? These pioneers put their own money into the sport to get it off the ground, and many of the players earning big money from darts today should thank these early pioneers who were organising the sport before they were even born.

Patrick, keep up your extraordinary work promoting the early days of darts, it is enjoyed by so many and so appreciated.

Kindest Regards, James King, Barcelona, Spain'

AND FROM 'A FAIRLY NEW SUBSCRIBER'

Alan Horsham writes:

‘Dear Dr Darts,

Just to say thank you for the September Darts History; a real enjoyable read as always. As a fairly new subscriber, may I say thank you for sending me the magazine each month. The article on Andre Declercq, the 65-year-old Belgium player, was fascinating and the article on the early days of darts in Germany a great read. Your writing on the history of darts is compelling reading to those like myself who love the sport, and believe it is second to none. Kindest Regards to you, Alan.’

[**Note:** Due to lack of space in this issue, more positive feedback on the ‘Early Darts in Germany’ article and other planned items have been held over until next month.]

DOUG PRIESTNER – WORLD RECORD HOLDER

English International Doug Priestner (pictured, right. Courtesy: PC Archive) was a reserve for the United Kingdom Darts Federation (UKDF) International Match, Great Britain versus Wales, held in May 1976.



In the mini-biographies provided, Doug was described as the ‘World Record holder of the most consecutive 180’s, recording five on the trot.’ What a wonderful record which I assume could only have been achieved during a game of 1,001 or higher. I wonder where he achieved the feat and whether it was ever beaten.

AND PLEASE REMEMBER... If you change your email address and still want to receive *Darts History* please let me know and I’ll amend my mailing list. Just drop me a line at patrick.chaplin@btinternet.com.

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