

MADHOUSE

THE GREATEST LEG EVER TOLD

THEY MAY BOTH BE ON NINE'S /// MICHAEL MAY MISS AND MICHAEL MAY HIT /// THEY'RE BOTH ON NINE'S /// THEY'RE BOTH ON A NINE /// THIS IS INSANE /// COME ON NOW /// WOW, THE WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP FINAL, MICHAEL VAN GERWEN IS ON A NINE DARTER IN THE WORLD FINAL AND JUST MISSES DOUBLE 12 /// OVER TO YOU MICHAEL SMITH /// ONE MAN MISSES, DOES THE OTHER MAN GET? /// I'VE NEVER SEEN THE LIKE /// COME ON, BULLY BOY /// YES, DOUBLE 12 YOU WILL EVER SEE IN YOUR LIFE /// I CAN'T UNBELIEVABLE /// THE CROWD ARE GOING /// MICHAEL MAY MISS AND MICHAEL MAY THEY'RE BOTH ON A NINE /// THIS IS INSANE WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP FINAL, MICHAEL VAN THE WORLD FINAL AND JUST MISSES DOUBLE THE OTHER MAN GET? /// I'VE NEVER SEEN BULLY BOY /// YES, DOUBLE 12 /// THAT IS THE MOST AMAZING LEG OF DARTS YOU WILL EVER SEE IN YOUR LIFE I CAN'T SPEAK



"I DON'T THINK ANYTHING WILL COME CLOSE TO THE GREATEST LEG OF ALL"

**EXCLUSIVE:
STUART PYKE**

FROM SHADOWING TO SHOWPIECE: HOW

Thrown in at the deep end, Stuart Pyke talks his journey in darts commentary

By Seb Mellis

The greatest memory of Stuart Pyke's commentary career came during the 2023 World Championship final during Michael van Gerwen versus Michael Smith, a contest that produced the greatest leg of darts ever.

Alongside Wayne Mardle, he instinctively delivered the iconic line: "Over to you, Michael Smith," as history unfolded at Alexandra Palace.

The leg remains the most memorable of them all with van Gerwen narrowly missing double 12 to complete his nine-darter, only for Smith to respond in stunning fashion. After landing his first two darts in the treble 20 and treble 19, the final dart soared into double 12 to seal perfection on the sport's biggest stage.

Pyke offered a behind-the-scenes glimpse into that iconic leg, explaining how he and Wayne Mardle fed off each other in the moment to deliver what many consider the greatest piece of darts commentary ever.

He said: "I basically said, over to you, Michael Smith. I was also saying, over to you, Wayne Mardle, you know, and they picked him up brilliantly."

Reflecting on the rhythm and spontaneity of live broadcasting, he admitted that even the

best duos don't always get it right, but that night felt different.

Mardle was momentarily lost for words, his stunned silence and raw disbelief capture just how extraordinary the moment was. Many fans will recognise the "I can't speak" following the winning leg.

Pyke was on co-commentary duties alongside Mardle as the drama unfolded at 'Ally Pally'.

The 64-year-old explained that such high-pressure moments are driven largely by instinct and a sharp awareness of the occasion inside the commentary box.

Pyke said: "Sometimes commentators in every sport will talk over each other, that's just the nature of the beast, but I think in that moment, I think we both got it, and hopefully we both nailed it as well."

With a background in Rugby League commentary, Pyke's interest in darts was sparked by the sport's entertainment value as much as the action on the oche. The fast-paced theatre of the 501-game quickly appealed to him, and he began covering darts in 1998 for Sky Sports News on the Northwest beat.

His break came thanks to former TV host Dave Clark, who recommended him to Sky Executive

Producer Rory Hopkins. That introduction opened the door to a shadowing opportunity at the 2003 World Matchplay in Blackpool – a week that would prove pivotal.

"I toddled up there to the Imperial Hotel in Blackpool for 10 o'clock on a Monday morning to be greeted by Sid Waddell, as lively as ever, running down the stairs of the hotel, saying, 'Right, you and me, kid, at one o'clock, Monday afternoon, World Matchplay first round, John Lowe against Keith Deller.'"

"I said, 'Lovely to meet you, Sid, but I'm just here to shadow.' He said, 'No, you're not. You're here to work.'"

At 41, Pyke admits he was thrown in at the deep end; but it was an experience he wouldn't have swapped for anything.

Preparation is the unseen foundation of darts commentary, with statistics, storylines, and subtle details all carefully pieced together ahead of the night.

Pyke believes statistics are often given more importance than they deserve when it comes to commentary.

"Stats are great, but they're overrated. I think it's all about painting the picture in colour and hopefully making the enjoyment for the viewers, rather than stats after stats after stats.

"That's just the way I've always worked."

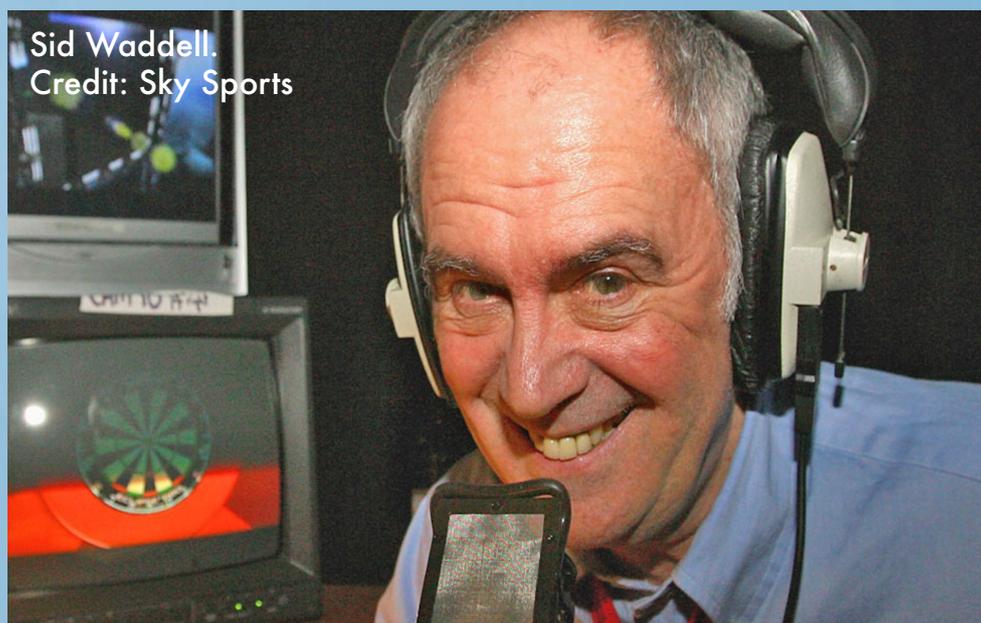
When asked how his style has evolved, Stuart is quick to credit his influence of his mentor, Sid Waddell.



Michael Smith

W STUART PYKE CALLED DARTS HISTORY

ary and being behind the microphone during the greatest leg of darts ever



The legendary broadcaster left a lasting imprint on how he approaches the microphone, not just in what he says, but in what he chooses to speak on.

"He always used to say sometimes commentary is as good as you make it, but sometimes saying nothing is as powerful as saying something."

This philosophy has come central to Pyke's approach. Over time, he has learned to appreciate the value of silence in the biggest moments rather than filling every second with words, he prefers to let the pictures tell the story; allowing the tension of a crucial double or the eruption of a crowd to breathe naturally.

Early in his career, he admitted to being guilty of over-talking, eager to pack every moment with detail. Experience has brought a more measured and relaxed delivery to keep him at the top level.

"I think everybody has their own way, don't they? That's

the beauty of commentary in any sport, everybody's just very different."

Taking inspiration from the greats has ultimately helped him to find his own voice.

Pyke admits criticism is simply part of the territory when your voice is heard by millions. In an age of instant opinions and social media reactions, he has made peace with the fact not every will enjoy his style.

"We're entitled to our opinion. If they don't like what I do, then they can switch off, and I think it's the same with every commentator. I think everybody in every sport has people that they don't particularly like listening to, and I'm no

different."

Importantly, he keeps perspective. For every critical remark, he believes the positive feedback far outweighs it.

"I get 10 times as many people say they like what I do than people say that they don't, so it is what it is.

"I'm lucky. I've always said I get paid for doing a hobby, and I do. There are people out there, there are soldiers, there are nurses, there are doctors, there

are many brilliant people. I get paid for doing a hobby, and I can't complain about that."

For Stuart Pyke, that sense of perspective is what gives his commentary its edge – the calm amid the chaos, the measured pause before the roar. And when the sport delivers one of those iconic

legs that lives long in the memory, it is that balance of preparation, restraint and passion that allows his voice to rise with the moment and become part of the history itself.



Stuart Pyke

RATED FOR ROOKIES

An easy guide designed to help new players find the right darts, build confidence, and enjoy the game from the very start

By Morgan Bennion

1. Target Exo 90% Tungsten - £39.95 - 18g, 21g, 22g, 23g, 24g

Released in 2024, the Target Exo range is undoubtedly the best option for beginners. There are three different types of barrels to choose from and the main advantage of them is they all have Target's swiss point technology, making switching points more accessible. They are the most expensive on the list but all in all they're worth every penny!

2. Red Dragon Javelin 85% Tungsten - £23.90 - 20g, 22g, 24g, 26g

The Red Dragon Javelin darts are arguably the best value for money. They are very similar to Winmau's Navigators in price and style, but the Javelins have a much more aggressive ring grip, offering more control in the dart.

At £23.90, the price is perfect for a beginner to kickstart their darts journey and build up to some of the pricier and more quality arrows.



3. Harrows Supergrip 90% - £35.95 - 21g, 22g, 23g, 24g, 25g, 26g, 28g, 30g

Designed for more control when throwing, these darts offer some of the best grip possible at a reasonable price. They are also available in a tapered style with Harrows' quick point system for an extra £10 at £45.95. They offer a razor-edged style ring grip that is smooth at both ends to offer versatility.

4. Winmau Navigators 90% Tungsten - £23 - 23g

The Winmau Navigators have been available for almost a decade, with its lowest retailing price at £7.99! Now just under 10 years later they have risen in price but are still reasonable in the current market. It is a straight barrel with ring grip; their downside is that they are only available in 23g, which could pose a problem for some players.



5. Harrows NX90 90% Tungsten - £35.95 - 21g, 22g, 23g, 24g, 25g, 26g

Harrows' second product on the list comes in at number 5. The NX90s are a great option to go for. They feature effective ringed, micro and scalloped rings along the length of the barrel, allowing more grouping and stability.



LUKE LITTLER WP ROSE PHIL TAYLOR NATHAN ASPINALL ADRIAN LEWIS ANDY HAMILTON



A NIGHT AT THE DARTS

STOKE

30 OCTOBER 2026 - TICKETS AT [DARTSHOP.TV](https://www.dartshop.tv)

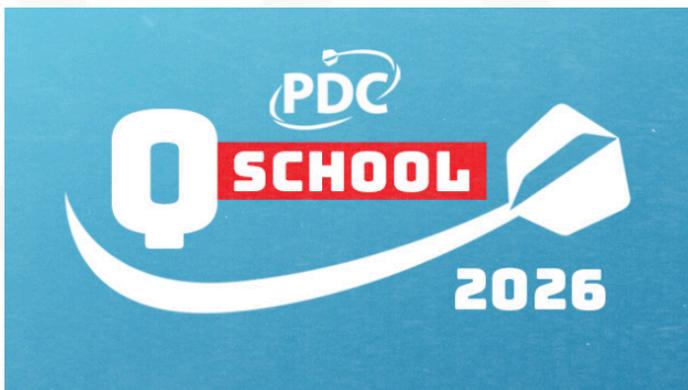
A FAMILIAR NAME,

The name is familiar, the talent is all his

By Jacob Bailey

When you think of the surname Sneyd, you'd be forgiven for thinking of Marc.

He was nominated for the Man of Steel award while playing for Salford Red Devils in 2024, now at Warrington Wolves, he has racked up more than 300 Super League appearances.



However, it's his brother Carl who has recently hit the headlines, winning his PDC tour card last month and this week qualifying for his first European Tour event.

Despite his growing reputation as a darts player, initially Carl wanted to be just like his younger brother. He said: "I went semi-professional when I was 21 and I still play a little bit of local league."

Carl's being modest. He represented Rochdale Hornets and Swinton Lions between 2008-2010 amassing 55 appearances and scoring more than 450 points.

Even now, as a profession-

al darts player, 'Bomber', nicknamed so because of his rugby days, balances his career on the oche with a day job doing sewage repairs for Yorkshire Water.

"It's not the one you want to do, but you've got to (afford to) be able to play darts every day."

With darts being a sport where earnings are based on results, Sneyd joked: "I am fully

focused on darts, but I still have to go to work, I need to earn money. I've got kids to feed."

At the turn of the year, Sneyd secured a PDC Tour Card, completing his rise

to the professional stage. A tour card lasts two years and entitles the top 128 players to compete at Players Championship events.

'The Bomber' managed to deliver on day two of Qualifying School. He had a straightforward route as he flew past Martin Tonks, Tommy Morris and Daryl Hunt, before Thomas Cromwell and David Sharp were seen off. Irishman and World Cup runner up, Steve Lennon was all that stood in his way, in a winner-takes-tour card battle. Sneyd won the match 6-4 and earned the right to call himself a professional darts player.

Despite a brilliant achievement, the self-assured Sneyd stays humble, "I've got a tour card, how many people would like to say that." He added, "So I'm just going to grab it and enjoy it."

It won't be the first time the 38-year-old has competed on the Pro Tour, having been called up last year after he won the second Challenge Tour event of 2025. It is a pay-to-enter system whereby anybody who thinks they're good enough or anyone who fails to pick up a tour card at Q-School can compete to earn money and boost their reputation. He said: "Last year I played quite a bit on the (Pro) tour with winning a challenge tour, but I think earning it has probably been a bit better."

The number fourteen on the Challenge Tour has realistic expectations going forward and hopes to improve his game to reach a major milestone in darts. "If I can win a few games on the tours, and keep myself in and around the top hundred, I'd be happy."

He believes his experience on the Pro-Tour stage last campaign will prove important as he embarks on life as a professional darts player. He said, "The more I went back, I



Carl S

A DIFFERENT GAME

is own - Carl Sneyd joins the PDC ranks

changed my mentality, I remember thinking, I do belong here."

With his confident attitude and optimistic approach to darts, Sneyd now has his sights set on major tournaments throughout the year.

"Everyone wants to play at the Winter Gardens in Blackpool, don't they? But it's a big ask. At the end of the year, it's the World Championships, that would be nice, but as I said I'm not really setting any goals, I just want to enjoy it."

The 38-year-old has had to play across every level of the sport to reach where he is now, including starting his career on the Amateur Darts Circuit (ADC). Whilst the ADC is a pathway that many players take, Sneyd was keen to point out the graft and hard-work that go into it.

He said, "It's hard, you're going to competitions mid-week after a full day at work. It's late nights, but you've got to get your attitude right and push through it."

The Oldham-based thrower now faces the added challenge of life on the road.

With most PDC floor events held in Wigan and Milton

Keynes, travel will now become a major part of his professional career.

"Travelling away from home took its toll on my form at times last season," Sneyd admitted. "This year, I just need to keep enjoying it."

'Bomber' got his 2026 campaign underway even further afield in Germany this week when he participated in the first two Players Championship events of the year.

The 38-year-old gave a great opening display of himself reaching the Quarter finals of Players Championship 2 in Hildesheim. He fell to the eventual champion Wessel Nijman but did secure wins over former major champions Ross Smith and Richie Edhouse.

En route to the illusive tour card, Sneyd competed six times on the Modus Super Series throughout 2025, which he saw as a huge building block. Sneyd reflected positively on his time on the Super Series.

He said, "Brilliant, absolutely, I had to qualify to be there, so when you get there, you've got to prove yourself."

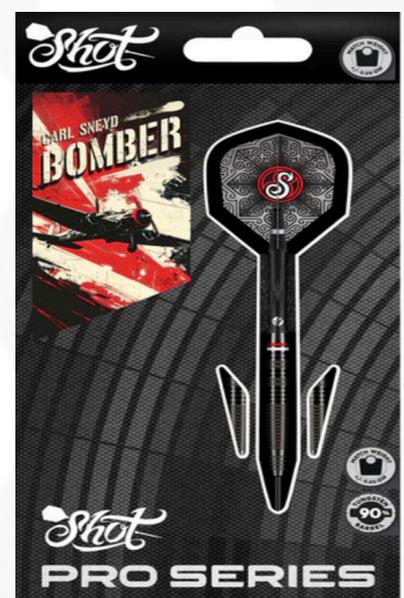
The streamed event, however, brought its own challeng-



Marc Sneyd
Credit: The Independent

es. "When you go up there and see the cameras, it can play on your mind a bit," he said. "It's little things you have to get used to, but over time you forget they're there."

While he may have never made it as a rugby player, the journey for Carl Sneyd is far from over. With his Tour Card in hand and a growing reputation on the darts scene, maybe one day the fans will be chanting his name.



ICONIC MATCHES WHICH

From Round One games to World Championship final

By Alex Tracy

1. 2007 World Championship Final - Phil Taylor vs Raymond van Barneveld

The highly anticipated final pitted 13-time reigning champion Phil Taylor against four-time BDO World Champion Raymond van Barneveld. It more than justified the hype. Taylor stormed out of the blocks, winning the first eight legs to surge into a commanding 2-0 lead in sets and legs. In that spell of dominance, van Barneveld had just a single dart at a double and missed a bullseye attempt for a spectacular 167 checkout.

Barneveld finally found his footing with a clinical 14-dart finish to claim his first leg in the ninth, but Taylor responded to take the set and extend his advantage to 3-0 in sets. From there, the momentum began to shift. Van Barneveld swept the fourth set without reply, sealing it with the tournament's highest checkout – a brilliant 170. Carrying that surge forward, he battled from 2-1 down to win the fifth set in a decider, suddenly trailing by just a single set and transforming the complexion of the contest.

The pair slogged and traded and after a gruelling battle, the match

reached 6-6, forcing a sudden-death final leg. In a controversial moment, Barney used Taylor's dart stuck in the bullseye as a marker to guide his own throw, gaining an advantage and hitting the bullseye to throw first in the leg. Both players scored heavily in the final leg, but Barney kept his cool and clinched the title with a precise double top, winning his first PDC World Championship.

2. 2018 World Championship Semi Final - Rob Cross vs Michael van Gerwen

Rob Cross started strongly in his World Championship debut but had the toughest test of his run so far. An opening set high in drama set the tone for the match with both men averaging more



Barney wins it all. /



Rob Cross

than 103 and missing darts for the set, before Cross edged in front. It was to remain that way with Cross keeping his nose in front throughout a high-quality affair, with neither man able to break. Then MVG took a 5-4 lead in the ninth set and seemed set to defend his title but missed five match darts at crucial doubles. Cross remained composed, hitting double 18 to force a sudden-death final leg, a rare scenario under modern rules when the final set is tied. Both players had already missed match darts, but in the decisive leg, Cross held his nerve and hit double 8 to claim a dramatic victory, reaching the final on his debut.

CH SHAPED THE GAME

inals, here are five PDC clashes you should watch



Credit: Sky Sports

3. 2013 Grand Slam of Darts Semi Final - Phil Taylor vs Adrian Lewis

Phil Taylor and Adrian Lewis delivered at the time a record-breaking match at the 2013 Grand Slam of Darts, combining for 32 180s and both averaging over 109, with Lewis reaching an incredible 110.99 despite losing.

Taylor started fast, taking the first two legs in 12 darts, but Lewis fought back with multiple 180s and quick legs, keeping the score

close at 5-5.

Taylor edged ahead with a 167 checkout to lead 6-5, but Lewis regained the advantage at 8-7. Taylor then surged, winning eight consecutive legs with big finishes, ultimately closing out the match 16-9, while Lewis continued to score heavily but couldn't halt Taylor's dominance.

4. 2012 World Cup of Darts Final - Australia vs England

England started the 2012 World Cup of Darts final strongly, with Phil Taylor defeating Paul Nicholson 7-4 and Adrian Lewis overcoming Simon Whitlock 7-5 to take a 2-0 lead. Taylor then beat Whitlock 7-6, despite missing 19 darts at doubles, putting England 3-0 up and seemingly on

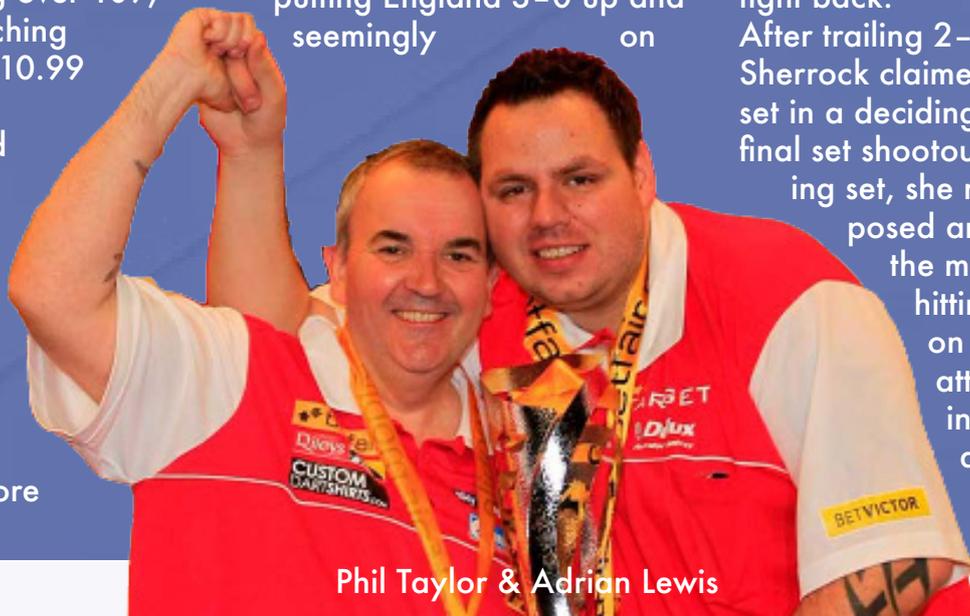
course for the title. Australia fought back, with Nicholson defeating Lewis 7-4 and then teaming with Whitlock to win the doubles 7-4, tying the match 3-3.

It went to a tense last leg decider with all four players having chances – Nicholson, Taylor, and Whitlock each missed match darts. • Finally, the 2012 & 2013 World Champion Adrian Lewis stepped up and hit double five to clinch the victory for England, delivering one of the most dramatic finishes in World Cup history.

5. 2020 World Championship Round One - Fallon Sherrock vs Ted Everts

Fallon Sherrock made history by becoming the first woman to defeat a man at the PDC World Darts Championship. Ted Everts won the opening set with a strong finish, breaking Sherrock's throw early, but she responded impressively, scoring six 180s and a remarkable 106 checkout to fight back.

After trailing 2-1 in sets, Sherrock claimed the fourth set in a deciding leg, forcing a final set shootout. In the deciding set, she remained composed and clinched the match 3-2 by hitting double 18 on her second attempt, thrilling the crowd at Alexandra Palace.



Phil Taylor & Adrian Lewis



BETFRED

WORLD
MATCHPLAY



JULY 18-26

**WINTER GARDENS
BLACKPOOL**

TICKET PRICES

DATE	START TIME	MATCHES	TABLE	BALCONY / STANDING
SATURDAY JULY 18	1900	4 X ROUND 1	£55	£50
SUNDAY JULY 19	1300	4 X ROUND 1	£50	£45
SUNDAY JULY 19	1900	4 X ROUND 1	£50	£45
MONDAY JULY 20	1900	4 X ROUND 1	£50	£45
TUESDAY JULY 21	1900	4 X ROUND 2	£50	£45
WEDNESDAY JULY 22	1900	4 X ROUND 2	£50	£45
THURSDAY JULY 23	2000	2 X QUARTER-FINAL	£60	£55
FRIDAY JULY 24	2000	2 X QUARTER-FINAL	£60	£55
SATURDAY JULY 25	2000	2 X SEMI-FINAL	£60	£55
SUNDAY JULY 26	1300	WOMEN'S WORLD MATCHPLAY	£30	£25
SUNDAY JULY 26	2000	FINAL	£70	£65

TICKET PRICES MAY INCUR AN ADDITIONAL BOOKING FEE.

PRICE PREVAILS IN ANTWERP AS PREMIER LEAGUE HISTORY IS MADE

Gerwyn Price picked up his first nightly win of the campaign as the Premier League headed to Belgium for the first time

By Jacob Bailey

QUARTER FINALS

Humphries vs Littler

Humphries took an early lead breaking the Littler throw before holding his own, alongside producing the first ton-plus finish of the evening. Despite both players missing multiple darts at double, it was Littler who managed to overturn a 4-1 deficit and take it level at 4-4. In a blistering opener a last leg decider was needed. In a match with over 14 180s, Littler took the deciding leg to win 6-5.

Rock vs van Gerwen

A routine first two legs were followed by a break and hold for Van Gerwen, before he started to run away with it. Rock struggled to get into the game but did manage to pull back a consolation leg before MVG ran out with a 6-2 win.

Clayton vs Bunting

In a game of two halves, it was Bunting who got off to a blinding start, picking up the first four legs on the spin. Clayton would go on to mount a fightback though, winning the next four legs, tying the game up at 4-4. Clayton would continue this trajectory, making it six legs won on the bounce and closing out a 6-4 victory with a 124 checkout.

Van Veen vs Price

An early break saw Gian van Veen take a two-leg lead. A flurry of holds followed with the Dutchman retaining his advantage. Price broke back and levelled the game at four each. The Welshman got in front for the first time at 5-4. A comfortable hold took the game to a deciding leg with Price having the darts. Both missed the bullseye for the match, but it was Price who saw out a 6-5 win.

SEMI FINALS

Van Gerwen vs Littler

Both players broke each other to start the match before both held to go 2-2. Five consecutive breaks of throw occurred before MVG managed to hold his own and defeat the reigning World Champion 6-4 to move into the final.

Price vs Clayton

It was a steady start with both players holding throw in less than 13 darts. Price was relentless for the following four legs but was unable to break his opponent down.



Gerwyn Price.
Credit: PDC

That was until leg seven when the Price pressure took a toll on Clayton. 'The Ferret' broke back immediately, before both held leading to a tiebreak. Price hit double five to overcome his Welsh teammate, advancing to the final.

FINAL

Van Gerwen vs Price

Price started the quicker of the pair smashing in a maximum with his first visit, breaking the MVG throw. He then held to take a comfortable two nil lead. Out of nowhere Van Gerwen then banged in two monstrous finishes, a 167 and 160 out, to draw the game level with the seven-time Premier League champion looking the better. Price broke back then held to open a two-leg advantage once again and went 4-2 up. Both players then broke each other before Gerwyn Price went onto win 6-3 for his first nightly title of 2026.

PREMIER LEAGUE HITS GLASGOW

**THE MADHOUSE MAGAZINE - OUR TOP THREE OF THE WEEK:
Nine darters which have happened in the Darts World Championships.**



1. MICHAEL SMITH (vs MVG) - 2023 Final

Michael Smith produced an iconic moment in the 2023 World Championship final when both he and Michael van Gerwen were on for a nine-darter, before Smith completed perfection at Alexandra Palace and rode that momentum to claim his first world title.

2. RAYMOND VAN BARNEVELD (vs Jelle Klaasen) - 2009 Quarter Final

Five-time world champion Raymond van Barneveld hit the first nine-darter in the tournament's history during his quarter-final clash with fellow Dutchman Jelle Klaasen, hitting two maximums before completing perfection with treble 20, treble 19 and double 12 in the second leg of the sixth set.

3. WILLIE BORLAND (vs Bradley Brooks) - 2021 Round One

The Scotsman made the headlines on his World Championship debut as he struck a nine dart finish to the shock of the Alexandra Palace. With a perfect start to the leg against fellow debutant Bradley Brooks, Borland then stepped up to hit a 177 and then a wonderful 144 checkout through two treble 20's and a double 12 to put him a leg ahead in the opening round of the competition.



WORD SEARCH: Search for darts legends, famous stages and classic moments from across the sport's history, featuring iconic names, venues and unforgettable finishes.

- | | |
|---------------|--------------|
| 1. ALLY PALLY | 6. BIG FISH |
| 2. BRISTOW | 7. LOWE |
| 3. GRAND PRIX | 8. MATCHPLAY |
| 4. CHECKOUT | 9. NINE |
| 5. TAYLOR | 10. LEG |



B	K	N	G	X	L	T	Y	B	N	S	L	L	L
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