



DRA Chairman's Report 2015

The DRA has an important role to play in professional darts and the work to professionalise all aspects of the governance of the sport continues.

The DRA has to remain vigilant to protect the sport from the scourge of match manipulation that affects many other sports. To date I am pleased to say that the sport is free of such issues. As part of the anti-corruption strategy the DRA has built relationships with other sports, the betting industry, the Gambling Commission and betting monitoring Companies. This means that if there were to be suspicious betting on a match, the DRA would be informed immediately. As part of this, the Chairman of the DRA sits on the Sports Betting Group and the Sports Betting Integrity Forum.

In 2016, working with the PDPA it is proposed to develop an anti-corruption e-learning package that all players will need to complete as part of a player education package. In addition to this, the DRA attend Q School each year and present at the PDPA Induction morning for all new tour card holders.

This work is essential to protect the sport and the DRA remain committed to ensure that the sport remains clean and that the viewing public, sponsors and broadcasters can have confidence in the integrity of every match that is played.

I believe that it is important that the DRA are visible and accessible to Players and Agents and to this end DRA Board Members spend more time at events now than ever before and regularly meet with Officials, Players and their Agents.

In 2015 the DRA licenced PDPA Members. This means that Players are subject to DRA Rules when they are playing in any event or exhibition. There have been a small number of referrals from non-DRA events where players have been dealt with by the Disciplinary Committee. This is an important part of ensuring professionalism across all aspects of professional darts.

Social media continues to be an issue. In December 2014 the DRA issued Social Media Guidelines for Players. It has been made clear to Players that breaches of the guidelines can be referred to the DRA Disciplinary Committee. The Committee have had to deal with a small number of such referrals.

The DRA have developed an Agents Registration scheme and Agents Regulations. This is part of the professionalisation of the sport and a key part of the anti-corruption strategy. The regulations came into force on 31st January 2016 and all Registered Agents will need to pass a "fit and proper person test" annually. Registered Agents will be listed on the PDC, PDPA and DRA websites. They will be subject to DRA rules and regulations and Players will only be allowed to use a Registered Agent.

The next stage of the process will be for the DRA to sanction events in 2016. This means that all sanctioned events will be able to use the DRA Rules and disciplinary process.

In addition to adopting the Scandinavian Tour, the work of the DRA expanded significantly from 2014 onwards with the Challenge Tour and Development Tour. This has increased the number of events and Players that are covered by DRA Rules when playing in competition. DRA Licensed Players are

now subject to DRA Rules when playing anywhere. These changes have led to a significant increase in referrals to the DRA Disciplinary Committee.

In 2015 the DRA Disciplinary Committee have dealt with 84 referrals and held 25 disciplinary hearings. This compares with 47 referrals in 2014, 31 in 2013 and 48 in 2012. Since the start of the 2015 season, cases dealt with by the DRA Disciplinary Committee have been reported on the DRA website. I am pleased to say that none of these cases have related to corruption.

The DRA also coordinate random drug testing in DRA sanctioned events, working closely with UK Anti-Doping. In October 2015 Richie Burnett was suspended for 18-months following an Anti-Doping Rule Violation. He tested positive for benzoylecgonine, a metabolite of cocaine, following an In-Competition test in 2014. The case was referred to the National Anti-Doping Panel and was heard by a tribunal, who imposed an 18-month sanction. This means he is suspended from competition until 2nd May 2016.

All of the developments and work of the DRA were delivered within budget for 2015, but the governance of the sport comes at an increasing cost. The costs of attendance at events, hearings and the drug testing program increase year-on-year. The DRA continues to be funded by the PDC, PDPA and by a licence fee paid by the Players. Licenced Managers and Agents also pay an annual licencing fee as will DRA sanctioned events in the future. The DRA is a not for profit organisation and any surplus from funding is reinvested in the governance of the sport.

I want to thank the DRA Board members for their hard work and support for the work of the DRA in 2015. I believe that the DRA continues to deliver as a lean and professional governing body.

Nigel Mawer QPM
Chair of the Darts Regulation Authority
31st January 2016