



Austrian Open Vienna attracts dart players from 14 nations

The Viennese Darts Association (WDV) recently played host to Austria's largest international darts tournament, the **Austrian Open Vienna**, an International Darts Championships - WDF Category 3. The event took place on 20/21st June in the "Haus der Begegnung Rudolfsheim" and was attended by dart players from 14 countries, with prize money totalling €3000.



Mr. Gerhard Zatlöckl, Head of Vienna's 15th district, officially opened the tournament on Saturday with special words of welcome to our international guests and wished all participants luck as he threw the opening darts.



Players then battled-it-out on the boards until the late evening as they strived to attain the title of “doubles champions”. The men’s final saw two Austrian players, the legendary Franz Thaler and his partner Steven Falk, eventually overcome the continuous challenges of George Michael (currently ranked 15 in the world) and his partner, Kostas Pantelidis from Greece, in what can only be described as a first-class performance. Barbara Pirolt and Daniela Piassoni managed to bravely force their way through to an all-Austrian ladies’ final, only to be subdued by the equally-impressive play of Barbara Kuntner and her partner Claudia Rottmann.



Prior to the finals, members of the audience were also given an intriguing demonstration put on by the darts team of the “Relief Organization for Austria’s Blind and Visually Impaired” [1], who competently proved that they their way around a dart board.





Sunday saw the singles competitions get underway and tensions rose as the players' sights became fixed not only on the prize money, but on the accompanying chance to compete at the Winmau World Masters, one of the most prestigious dart tournaments in the world. The semi-finals in the men's and ladies' competitions all had Austrian representatives but alas both Erich Stadler and Zoran Lerchbacher were eventually overpowered, as were Barbara Kuntner and Stefanie Holten. All hopes of an Austrian victory then lay with young Bernhard Tschinkowitz who, in spite of his fantastic performances all the way through to the youth final, was narrowly defeated by Sándor Kőműves from Hungary.

Hence, it was to be a set of truly international finals as Carole Frison (France) managed to overcome the fighting efforts of Zsófia Köntös (Hungary) in the ladies', while John Michael (Greece) proved why he was favourite in the men's by defeating the No.3-seeded Frenchman, Cyril Blot.





It can only be concluded therefore that the Austrian Open Vienna 2009 was indeed a roaring success, which it mostly due to the many volunteers and helpers who gratuitously offered their services throughout the event, and it will certainly be a fixed date in the darts calendar for years to come. A special word of thanks also goes to the Head of Vienna's 15th District, the staff of the Haus der Begegnung Rudolfsheim, the facility workers, and the catering team: Mr. Sturm and his crew. Without the help and dedication of all those mentioned above the event would not have been the success that it was.



Further information, results and photos of the Austrian Open Vienna 2009, are available on the tournament website <http://www.austrian-open-vienna.at>.

If this article has aroused your interest in playing darts then please do not hesitate to contact us. You will find all the relevant information and contact details on the WDV website <http://www.wdv-dart.at>

On that note: GOOD DARTS!

[1] The Hilfsgemeinschaft (Relief Organization for Austria's Blind and Visually Impaired) has existed since 1935 as a secular, non-profit association without affiliations to a political party or group.

Our goal is to improve the living conditions of visually impaired and blind people. At present we provide support and guidance for about 4,200 members from all over Austria. Almost all Hilfsgemeinschaft activities are funded from private donations. Serious and transparent donations management is an overriding concern in our work. The Hilfsgemeinschaft has held the Donations Management Quality Seal since 2001. Our donors can be sure that we manage their donations precisely as they intended.

Membership is free for visually impaired and blind people, and enables them to access many services free of charge. <http://www.hilfsgemeinschaft.at/index.php?id=264>