

Darts Ontario Testimonies

"The experience I've had with Darts Ontario was great when I was a youth. Honestly, it felt more like a convention to have fun, but if you wanted to win, the challenge was there. I think Darts Ontario is a great way for kids who share the interest of playing darts to come together, and potentially learn and grow as individuals while they try to hone their skills. For the few years I was with Darts Ontario, travelling around Canada was definitely the highlight. You get to meet people who you would have normally never got to meet. No organization is perfect, but handling that many kids and making sure everything runs smoothly sometimes is no easy task, so give Darts Ontario some slack if you encounter some issues with them."

"Overall, I would say my experience with Darts Ontario was amazing. I met some fantastic people, made friends, and most importantly had fun. If you win, it's more fun.
:P"

- Christopher Yen

Darts Ontario Youth Program Graduate Review March 3rd, 2017

I have been a part of this program since I was nine years old and there is no denying that this program has provided me with a very rewarding experience to say the least. I have met hundreds of people while being a part of this program that I would not have otherwise, and with that, I have formed friendships that will last a lifetime.

Qualifying for provincials every year I played in the program and moving forward to then qualify for team Ontario three times thus far, with three national titles to my name currently. I think it is fair to say, I have had a successful run to the program. Nationals and even provincials have always been an exhilarating experience that anyone should be happy to take with them on their exit out of such an amazing program.

With the fortunate experiences I have had single moments that will always have a place in my heart. The number one moment has to go to my 2015 National Junior Singles Championship and followed right by my very first time qualifying for team Ontario in 2012, when I just turned 13 years old days before provincials rolled around. This being my last year in the program, I am aiming to add more to my resume.

This program has provided me with more than darts skills however, after joining darts, I found myself doing better in math, which then extended to other unrelated subjects in school, like history, law and politics. Those that know me know that I am very passionate about all three of those areas of study. These are passions that I cannot guarantee I would have developed without joining this program. Before I joined darts, I

was not studious whatsoever, and I did not have any clear-cut passions like I do now, darts was my first passion and I strongly believe it led me towards the others I currently have today.

Anybody who knew me in 2012 would say that I was a shy kid who could throw darts pretty well, today I would be more so acknowledged as a loudmouth who loves the spotlight rather than someone who's quiet and reserved. My personality took a complete 180-degree turn, and I am happy for it, I became more sociable, largely thanks to Bruce Davey and Debbie Burch. There is no doubt in my mind that without their guidance I would not have developed into the person that stands here today. Without this program, I most likely would not have even joined darts in the first place and might not have become who I am now.

Everything above, rather indirectly or directly, is because of the Darts Ontario Youth Program, one that I have grown to love and appreciate. I give my thanks to those that dedicate their time to this program to provide experiences like mine.

Sincerely, Dillon Wall

Darts Ontario Youth Experience

By Keifer Durham

My experience in the darts Ontario youth program was absolutely amazing. I wouldn't be the player I am today without playing in the youth program. I learned so much not just from my league or coaches, but from the parents and kids I played.

The highlights of playing youth darts for me were qualifying and going to provincials and meeting new friends. It was also nice to seeing how much fun every kid and parent in the room was having. Making Nationals two times was an amazing feeling and is one of my proudest achievements as well. Other highlights were seeing how much sportsmanship there was at provincials. Whether you played poorly or well every player in that room showed so much sportsmanship and respect for each other, It was truly amazing to be a part of that.

The best thing about youth darts was of course all the antics Marjorie Allardyce and the rest of the darts Ontario youth executive got up to. Marjorie was definitely the ringleader whether it was the dancing, the pranks she pulled on us kids and our parents she always knew how to have fun. Marjorie will be sadly missed by so many people, she will always have a spot in all of our hearts.

The darts Ontario youth program was a huge part in my life for 10 years I can't imagine where I would be in my dart career without it. I'm so thrilled that I got to compete every year was different and amazing. The youth players are the future of darts and we are all so lucky to have such an amazing program to be a part of.

Thank you to all that helped when I played in the youth program and thank you to all that still help the youth players today.

Youth darts was the time to learn the sport and learn how to be a great player. I not only learned my finishes and how the format works, but I also learned how to be a good sport and learn how to both win and lose. I met so many friends and "family" all over the country from my trips to nationals, many of whom I still keep in contact with. My first time on Team Ontario was my sister (Carrie Hayhurst) and I's first time travelling without our family (we were 12 and 13.) Marjorie, Paul, and Allyn were always so accommodating and friendly. We always had a blast travelling and being in another province with our "dart family" that truly felt like a family after that week. From pranking the boys, to shopping together and playing games, to cheering on and supporting your fellow teammates while they're at the board. It was such an amazing feeling being a part of that atmosphere and having Marjorie, Paul and Allyn as your biggest supporters the entire trip!

Ontario is lucky to have such great leaders that keep everyone like a family and have everyone support each other. Even the next year at provincials you find yourself going around and cheering on your old teammates and hoping they make the team again. Being a part of Darts Ontario brings a new dynamic to darts. There is so much talent and potential, which makes the competition both mentally and physically tough, building you up to be a better player. Playing in the youth has definitely prepared me to play in the adults. I love playing fellow youths that I grew up playing with, as well as the extremely talented adults I have met over the many years playing. Youth darts is the perfect foundation to continue the sport in adults. It prepares you for the competition as well as helps you meet players before entering a whole new atmosphere. I am extremely happy I was able to start my career in the youths and meet so many people. There is a huge amount of support and encouragement in the youths from everyone and it really is the perfect atmosphere to learn to love the game!

Sarah Hayhurst-Newman

I had a blast as I was fortunate to be a Provincial Champion in 1998 my second year playing competitive darts. The players on and off the team were all amazing. The executives were all amazing and the pleasure of meeting people from all over the country is something I will always remember. If I were to say to any kid, it would be to get involved in youth darts for the friendships and experiences. I still have friends now from when I played youth darts.

Steve Warnock

What a amazing experience. I was very pleased with my accomplishments through darts Ontario winning the provincial senior girls champion back to back years of 1993 and 1994. Also, proud to represent Team Ontario both those years was a huge accomplishment in 1993 winning the provincial Canada cup and also winning the Nodor cup. I placed second in senior girls doubles the following year which was a huge win. Again, at Nationals going out with a bang winning the senior girls singles National Champion and again winning the Canada cup and Nodor cup. I had fantastic youth years in Darts Ontario making friends and still playing against them in the adult division. Amazing executive with Carol Collette which was my pleasure to be a part of such a great organization. It's a great sport to get kids involved in.

Beckie Papp

I believe it was 1995. I was 17. My cousin and I teamed up in Doubles that year. On Friday night's back then, and I'm sure the tradition continues, there was a Blind Draw Tournament.

Norm (my cousin and partner) and I were practicing for a long period once the first few rounds were finished. We played a few guys for what seemed like a few hours. A team that we knew we'd have to get by if we were to have any success that year. Finally, our arms wore out, and we retired to our room for the night.

We cruised through out Saturday Section, and had just as much success on Sunday through our Round Robin. Landing us in the knockouts.

Once we heard our names called, and who we'd be playing in the Semi-final, we looked at each other, and knew our luck needed to be better than our Friday night meeting with the same team we'd practiced against. They destroyed us on that Friday. Winning nearly 75% of the at least 30 games we played.

Amazingly enough these two fellas had become friendly with us, and we were able to joke around while we were warming up, which loosened us up for our semifinals. Which I'm happy to say, we were able to win in convincing fashion. And on to the stage, and the final.... Where we proceeded to fall 3-2 to the Champs that year.

This was the year my League was highly decorated. Junior Boys Singles, Junior Girls Singles, Junior Doubles, and Senior Doubles Runner Ups.

Belleville had great players in the '90's.

Easily my greatest Darting experiences were at the 4 Provincials I was privileged to be part of.

The people, the atmosphere, the experiences, and friendships forged are memories I'll take with me as long as my brain will allow.

Bob Lucas - 1993-1996 Provincial Alumni

I played in the first provincial championship in 1986 and was fortunate enough to win the Junior Girl's title. It is still a treasured memory from my youth. Playing for Team Ontario at Nationals was a wonderful experience and allowed me to meet other youth around the country. I was also lucky enough to represent Ontario in 1989 as a senior. Again, I met players from across Canada and beyond!

Thank you to all of the executives who worked (and work) to make this happen for our youth players!

Carolyn Rossignol

I was part of youth darts for 8 years and it seems like it flew by. Looking back my game improved immensely, and I achieved new goals throughout my career. I competed at provincials 6 times and it was always a blast. Although I never made the ultimate goal of Team Ontario, I can't complain because I still had a very successful career. My goal every year was to not get knocked out on Saturday and I never failed that. I also impressed myself by coming 3rd in the bursary in my final year, despite barely practicing. But that's enough about me.

Darts gave me one thing though that is bigger than any of that. I met one of my best friends through darts. And not only that, we went on to become back to back senior doubles champions. After losing on stage the first year, we won twice after. But I learned a lot through this. We had an instant chemistry that is rarely seen in any sport. Our ability to be in pressured situations and just be cracking jokes was something I've never seen before. I've got a video of us on stage just joking around and having a good time. We never got on each others backs and we just kept a positive attitude toward our competition. We just had fun. And that is what darts is about. It's about having fun. I've never gotten along with somebody so much in my life and I'm happy darts gave me the opportunity to do so. It definitely led to many great memories.

So my advice to any young darters reading this is relax, have fun, crack jokes, make friends. You never know, someday you could meet your best friend.

Sincerely,
Matt Holmes

My participation in the Oshawa Youth Dart League has been extremely rewarding. I have had the opportunity to meet some great people and players. I have enjoyed the tournaments which sometimes involved travel and hotels, so my family made it a mini vacation. It has been an opportunity also to spend more time with family and enjoy their support when I played. The competition was fun and presented a challenge which made me strive to improve and practice. Playing every Sunday and Wednesday was a lot of fun and I will miss this now that I am no longer eligible to play as a youth. I will miss the friends I made through the league and the Darts Ontario program, as well as so many people I have met. I will miss the volunteers who run the program. Thank you to the

leaders of the Oshawa league and the executive of Darts Ontario for always organizing the program, tournaments and always responding to the players.

Sincerely,
Karleena Irwin