



## Manitoba's Charlene Bell - One of the N.D.F.C.'s Rising Stars!

by Kip Morrish

In a small town approximately 12 miles south east of Winnipeg, Manitoba, I found a young lady who works in the beauty salon in that town but who is making quite a name for herself in the darts world. Charlene Bell comes to us with quite a background, and although steel tip darts were not her first priority, her move from soft-tip to steel-tip has proven to be quite rewarding.

When Charlene was about 19 she worked at an English style pub and because her father was

English, he had her playing darts on a regular basis. That is how she met her husband at a dart tournament and she has been hooked ever since – both on her husband and darts!

Steel tip darts were not her first priority, however. She played soft tip for about 11 years and was a member of Team Canada for three of these years, participating in Las Vegas with her best finish being second place in the cricket event.

Charlene feels lucky in that her husband is her biggest supporter and he also plays darts. As a result, they travel together to as many tournaments as they can. They always encourage each other when playing and have fun trying to show each other up – all in fun of course.

When not playing darts, Charlene likes to read. Her favorite authors are Jane Austin and Anne Rice – romance and gore – what else could a girl ask for. Her favorite T.V. program is House and as far as hobbies are concerned, she likes watching movies, playing poker and going camping. Favorite food is a trip to a restaurant for seafood which goes well with butter and garlic and of course a bottle of wine.

Charlene has been a member of her provincial team, Team Manitoba three times in 2005, 2006 and 2007. In 2006 her goal was to finish in the knock-out round at the national championships. This she did finishing Joint 5th. Her goals for 2007 were much the same except she wanted to finish in the Top 5 of the national rankings and possibly earn a position on the World Cup Team. Unfortunately this didn't happen, however, she did once again finish Joint 5th at the National Championships. Another achievement during the past year was that she won the world ranked tournament, the Klondike, held in Edmonton. This was her first time of playing on-stage which she says was awesome. Again, she would love to be able to play on stage at the National Championships and hopefully that will come very soon – after all she was only one double away this past year.

When the subject of practicing came up, Charlene admitted that she is lazy in this area and has no set routine. She usually manages to get around 3-4 hours of practice in week and she knows that this is not nearly enough. She does try to practice an hour or two a day about three weeks prior to a tournament as that really helps from getting a tired arm by the last event of the tournament. She does play in an open singles league once a week which involves a lot of games in a night and playing against some of the top players in the province. She thinks that this is one of the reasons that she has improved so much.

Charlene and husband Ryan like to travel out of province to as many tournaments as possible. Having employers who are supportive of her participation in such events helps her a lot. She is hoping to have the opportunity of playing outside Canada at some time in the future.

Charlene never participated through the youth program although she is now fully aware that there are a number of very active youth programs in most of the provinces. I asked her if she had any words of encouragement for our young players and her comment was "this is gentlemen's and women's game and that everybody should carry themselves as such. You must remember that no one can make you lose or win except the person who is holding your darts. There will be times of love and hate for the sport but keep plugging away at it and good and maybe even great things will happen to you."

Finally, as always I asked the question about what the players think the N.D.F.C. could do to improve the level of darts in this country. Charlene felt that the N.D.F.C. knows what their responsibilities are to the dart players. She thinks it's the responsibility of everyone in the organization, from the players to the president to try and come up with ideas and solutions to help our organization get more support from sponsors, television coverage and recognition from sports federations in each province. It would be great to have some of our major tournaments televised with TSN in the same manner as bowling, pool and poker.

This was a very interesting interview from a quiet spoken lady who has some very interesting and important ideas about this sport of ours. By the time this article gets to press, she will have made her trip to England and I hope that it was everything that she believed it to be. As we start on another dart season, I am sure she has her goals in place for the coming year and I hope she is able to achieve at least some of her ambitions.



## Canada Results

### The Klondike Open's 50th Anniversary

The Edmonton City Dart League celebrated its 50th consecutive Klondike Open Dart Tournament this year at the Ramada Inn, Edmonton, Alberta

