

THE FREE ANASTASIA MOVEMENT by Chuck Hudson

Several have asked, some have scoffed and others just don't know care or know what is going on with all of this, allow me you explain.

The FREE ANASTASIA MOVEMENT is one of awareness, that's all I want, for people to know what is going on and form their own opinion.

While I call it The FREE ANASTASIA MOVEMENT, it's not only about 3 Time World Champion Anastasia Dobromyslova, but she is the most recognizable face hurt by what I consider the absurd decision to ban Russian and Belarusian players from competing in WDF events worldwide. This ban is in effect for Men, Women and Youth players. The ban was imposed by the World Darts Federation to protest the war between Russia and Ukraine. Apparently they feel Vladimir Putin will be hurt by this, but in reality it's the sport of darts that is hurt by this.



While the WDF considers themselves to be the world authority on darts, we all know that they are not the highest form of the sport on the planet. The Professional Darts Corporation has had similar issues of players being banned by the now defunct British Darts Organisation way back when they were getting off the ground. The WDF did not consider themselves to be so high and mighty when the old BDO existed, they always bowed down before the bigger fish in the pond. But when the BDO imploded, the WDF saw their chance and even created new events using familiar brands of the BDO like Lakeside and the Winmau World Masters.

Everyone can agree that war is hell and this war is no different. But to think they can effect change is preposterous. What exactly should these players do to stop this war? They did nothing to start it yet they are to be banned because of where they were born. Again, it's preposterous.

I learned long ago that one person can make a difference. This is also true in the world of darts. So I decided to try to make a small difference. I created a shirt that simply said "FREE ANASTASIA" and wore it at the Las Vegas Open. I asked a few people that I know to pose for a picture with me. Anyone that's know me understand that I don't get in pictures very much but I felt like this was a statement thus my change of perspective. The first person that saw the shirt and said something was Fallon Sherrock. While I have talked with her before I really don't know her, surely she didn't know me but was kind enough to take this picture with me in support of her friend.

I talked with others that day and in all thirty players posed with me. From America, England, Australia, Holland and Canada, nobody turned me down. Nobody would want these restrictions placed on them or their friends and probably not even their worst enemy.

I know there are some smart people that work for the WDF, I personally know one very intelligent individual on the board. I just cannot comprehend for the life of me why in a room full of qualified people charged with protecting and growing the sport that this was approved. And this by an organization that claims it is non-political. Some may chalk this up to just another crazy thing happening in this crazy world we live in, but not me, I look for a deeper reason and for the life of me I can't see one. Surely someone had to interject some sanity into this discussion.

After returning from Vegas I created a T-Shirt to sell with all profits going to promote darts. I would love to see these shirts showing up at tournaments all across the world. For now I'm humbled that after Las Vegas the WDF called a meeting to reevaluate this decision. They effectively doubled down but I'm proud to know little old me could have been the reason for the meeting, regardless if they say it or not.

If you want to read more about this topic, please check out this great article on the Dart News website.

<https://dartsnews.com/wdf/column-no-neutral-flag-players-but-transgender-players-at-lakeside-wdf-causes-friction>

If you are interested in getting one of the shirts please visit this link on our website.

<https://www.unitedstatesdarts.com/dartwerx-apparel.html>

Chuck