

**Fast**

**&**

**Furious**

**Snooker**

MARCH

ISSUE 1

**PTC  
Grand  
Finals**

**RONNIE  
DOES IT  
AGAIN**

**JIMMY WHITE  
LEGEND**

**MEET MARCEL**



Marcel Eckardt might not be a name you are familiar with, in snooker. 21 year old Marcel is part of the new breed of referees.

“This interview is the first I have done; I am a little bit excited.” At 21 Marcel describes himself as organised, helpful and friendly all good qualities for a referee. How did the German born ref get into snooker?

“I was 13 I think, I watched it on telly and found it interesting. I never got the chance to play snooker growing up as there were no tables near where I lived. Snooker and Pool aren’t popular in my region but I want to do my best to change that.

“I love to play but you can’t be a player and a referee, so my solution to this was play pool. I started at 19 far too late to reach anything, but I’m not bad at it. It helps me learn more to improve my skills as a referee as well.”

**Snooker is seeing a change, with new players and recently a large intake of young referee’s, what interests young people in the game?**

“I think snooker is the perfect alternative for young people. Not everyone follows the crowd and favours team sports. Skills like concentration, tactics but also mental strength are important for snooker.”

“Refereeing the final on PHC was exciting but, I had spent the day before feeling really ill, I felt confident and very proud to be given the opportunity.



I would next like to referee the World Championship final, that's the dream.”

Referee's in all sports face a lot of stick from fans, but it seems snooker fans are more respectful.

“Snooker referees are doing a good job. You don't see a lot of mistakes being made. In my opinion that's the difference. On the other side I wouldn't expect respect for doing a bad job.”



## The WhirlWind blows into Fast and Furious Snooker's Favourite's



Jimmy White the People's Champion, has won the hearts of the old and young the world over.

His fast and entertaining game play was considered to be before its time in the sport. Bringing fun, passion and serious skill to the table was what created a buzz around Jimmy; not to mention his cheeky chappy attitude, which made him a star.

James Warren White, or Jimmy White, MBE, there is so much about Jimmy that makes the six times World Championship runner up; affectionately called the Peoples Champion. Jimmy was the youngest ever winner of the UK Amateur Championship, in 1980 at the age of 18, in that year he also became professional.

Before all that, Jimmy was born in Tooting, London in 1962. His dad tom was part of a social club near where he lived and this is where he started his career. At the age of 14 Alex Higgins came to the club to play an exhibition match, and every minute a young Jimmy spent watching Higgins he fell more in love with snooker. Jimmy was not very academic so he skipped school on regular occasions to play snooker at his local club, Ted Zanicelli. It was at this time White met Tony Meo, the pair would take part in money matches at various locations. It was these matches that led to a very successful amateur career and one that lead to the entertaining snooker player he has been for the past 31 years.

Since those early days Jimmy has secured himself 23 professional titles and 10 ranking titles, along with the hearts of every snooker fan across the world. Although the one title Jimmy has wanted for many years has remained out of his grasp.

The World Championships has been the theatre of all of White's snooker disappointments; the Crucible has not so much been the theatre of dreams for Jimmy, more the theatre of nightmares. In 1982 he led Alex Higgins 15-14 in the semi final and was 59-0 up in the penultimate frame, he was as close to the final as just one red and a colour. He missed the red using the rest and then had to watch Higgins; complete a frame winning 69 meaning his chance in the final would have to wait another year.

'Jimmy is a true legend of sport and a people's champion if ever there was one. His love of the game shines through and his enthusiasm for snooker is as strong as when he turned pro 31 years ago.' Barry Hearn said on the subject of Jimmy.



In 1984 after winning the Masters Jimmy found himself in his first World Championship final, he met Steve Davis in the final and was trailing by 4-12, after two sessions but found second life and reduced the deficit to 15-16. After an aggressive break of 65 he took the score to 16-17, but once again he was unable to come back from Davis' 40 point lead and ended up losing 16-18. He did however win the World Doubles with Alex Higgins later that year.

‘The Whirlwind’s immense talent has withstood the test of time. He accepts winning and losing with the same attitude. A true: pro.’ Steve Davis added to thoughts of his friend

In the mid 80’s, who can forget the brilliant record Jimmy and other players sang along with Chas and Dave, which at a chart position at number 2 proved the UK was literally snooker loopy; the match room mob also scored an appearance on Top of Pops, which wasn’t bad for the snooker boys who had never sung publicly before.



‘Jimmy has always been a great support to me, from day one of my career. He is a lovely guy and great snooker player, really the nicest person you could ever meet, I love him to bits.’ Michaela Tabb said fondly of Jimmy.

It wasn’t until 1990 that Jimmy got his revenge on Steve Davis, with a 14-16 victory in the semi finals but this did not lead him to the winning post. He was beaten in the final 12-18 by Stephen Hendry. He did however manage to gain victory over Hendry, as White defended his title in the World Match play title in the same year and later in the classic which saw a win of 10-4 in 1991.

‘He was the most exciting player of the 80’s and a true friend. He has a great heart and everyone could see that, and still can.’ Kirk Stevens added

The 1992 World Championships saw White drawn again against Tony Drago, after a 8-4 opening lead, Jimmy made history by being the second person to make a maximum 147



break in the World Championships, he won £100,000; after the maximum he looked strong throughout the rest of the tournament, beating Alain Robiduex, Jim Wych and Alan McManus to make the finals again, again he met Stephen Hendry in the final. It was a tense final between White and Hendry, especially with White looking so strong but once again his win was robbed from him as Hendry lifted the trophy with an 18-14 victory.

After an unsteady time through the mid 2000's Jimmy saw his ranking place drop considerably it was in the 2009/2010 season that Jimmy made the come back from ranking 65 to a very respectable ranking of 51.

'Jimmy has and continues to do a lot for the sport, he is a great present.' says Marcel Eckardt, snooker referee.



Snooker has always been Jimmy's first love but he also has a passion for pool and poker, Jimmy won the Masconi cup pool tournament in 1996 and beat Steve Davis at a Poker millions event in 2003, if you enjoy playing poker you can book Jimmy to come and play along, but make sure you're good as Jimmy is a talent at this also.



In 2009 Jimmy took part in I'm a Celebrity get me out of here, there was a lot of backlash from the show as Jimmy fans called foul on how unfairly edited the show was, other contestants regularly commented how sweet and funny he was, but show produces never appeared to show that on TV. Jimmy did however manage to overcome his fear of heights, on the show in a challenge in which he won 5 meals out of a possible nine for his camp mates. Although Jimmy was a firm favourite to win I'm a Celebrity get me out of here his lack of TV time, meant the Italian chef and ladies favourite Gino D'Acampo became the winner.

Now at an older age Jimmy is World Seniors Champion a World title has finally been placed upon White and it really doesn't matter that it's the senior's version. Jimmy is also a business man as well as a snooker player; he is director of Trump Technologies with Jamie Trump (Judd's uncle). Jimmy endorses the low energy automatic doors which stands the name 'Whirlwind Sprint', a new era in the company.

'Jimmy has always been a hero of mine from the minute snooker got into my blood. I just loved his passion and honesty; he was different from the rest. I am honoured now to be in business with Jimmy and to actually say, he is a good friend, is an awesome feeling.' Jamie says in great respect of Jimmy.



Jimmy is all that his friends have said and possibly even more, he is a fantastic snooker player, business man; a huge support to those in need and a man who has an amazing collection of the most amazing shoes you have ever laid eyes on.





He has done so much for snooker and continues to do so; he firmly believes that snooker should be given a place in the Olympics games as it has one in the Asian games. Outlining that Snooker is a game of mental and physical ability. This fact has sadly been over looked by London 2012 organisers, but Jimmy will continue to spread the love of the sport.

How best could you finish up a story on the Whirlwind? But by a quote from Kevin J Kelly, who has been a good friend of Jimmy's for over 25 years.

‘When you get a call at 7am to go and practise that sums it up for me!’

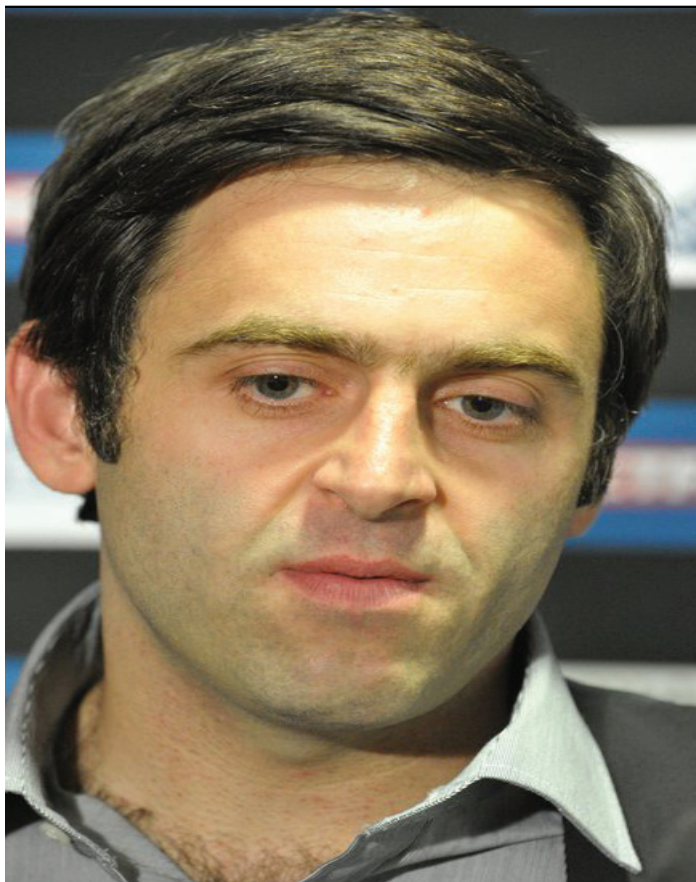
## Ronnie Does it again!



Ronnie O'Sullivan is one of snooker's greatest players, 3 times World Champion who has been World number 1 in the rankings; on five occasions. It has been reported that he has made 6 million pounds in his career, just marginally behind top Snooker earner Stephen Hendry. Loved and hated by snooker fans in equal measure, no one can deny Ronnie is an intriguing player to watch around the table.

Love him or hate him, no one can deny he is a genius on the baize, he has made 11 maximum breaks in his career; a record that still stands today. Ronnie also holds the title of fastest maximum break in which he completed in a mammoth 5 minutes 20 seconds- on average he potted a ball every 8.8 seconds! That is very impressive.

O'Sullivan is top tabloid fodder, from his childhood to his personal life everything about him has been printed. Recently however the column inches have reported his demise in a game he once loved.



His demise came quickly as the PTC events started, Ronnie won the first event of the PTC's but wasn't seen again until the 4th event. Missing some of the events cost him greatly in ranking points. Missing these events meant that Ronnie's ranking points suffered. The PTC events are low in money but high in ranking points; giving many lower ranked players the chance to climb the rankings quickly.

The Rocket looked as though he might not make it to the World Championship's in 2011, but thankfully Ronnie did make it to the event. To everyone's surprise he performed well, pretty much punishing Dominic Dale in the first round. He took to the baize like the pre-verbal duck to water. It was at the World championships that Ronnie stated.

'The most important thing for me, is that if I can enjoy it and wanting to be out there whether I win or lose.'

It came apparent that the idea of Ronnie with drawing had been very real for the Rocket, as he spoke openly about it.



'I did withdraw then someone rang me Monday morning and asked if I was sure, I had the weekend to think about it. I didn't really want to keep on suffering, I have tried to address my feelings over the years; I know some people think I make it up but it is difficult for me.'



Ronnie made a good appearance at the World Championships, only losing to the eventual winner John Higgins. Fans and the media hoped that Ronnie was back to fighting until the new season started with a new event. The Goldfields open in Bendigo Australia, saw snooker's finest head down under. It was this event that saw Ronnie withdraw due to neck and back problems on the first half of his journey to Australia. Ronnie was due to face Dominic Dale, which would have been a rerun of the World Championships. Fans complained they had bought tickets just to see the superstar; this didn't however seem to effect the footfall at the venue. But the fear remained however that the Rocket, just might not be as in love with the game as he made it seem he was in Sheffield.



‘I love Ronnie O’Sullivan, the first question I am asked is about Ronnie O’Sullivan. He is great for Snooker. I don’t know what Ronnie O’Sullivan is going to do, and I’m not sure Ronnie O’Sullivan knows what he is going to do. I love the boy to death I think he’s a fabulous snooker player.’ Barry Hearn added enthusiastically about O’Sullivan.

Ronnie pulled out of the PTC Grand Finals in Galway Ireland due to suffering from glandular fever, something which had also plagued him before the German Masters and the Chinese Open. The illness has left Ronnie feeling lifeless and exhausted. Where his Manager Dejango Fung Said

‘ It’s a fair question to ask whether he can continue as a player.’ Fear spread further for snooker fan and Rocket lovers when his manager. There is clear worry whether the player will be at the world’s event this year. As Fans and the media are concern about Ronnie’s health, this could seriously effect the stars future in the game, the hope of more World championship wins for the rocket seem to be of little hope right now.

Back in September Ronnie knew that he could slip out the top 16 and have to go through qualifiers to get to events such as the World Championships. So far he has managed to avoid slipping from the top 16, a good performance in the PTC this season has kept him safe at 15th in the World; just safe for the time being.



## Lee PTC Grand Final Winner



The PTC Grand Finals was warmly welcomed by Galway, as the best of 7 frame Snooker came to visit.

Here at Fast and Furious Snooker we had our favourites, all of whom lost! So never take a tip from us!!

Dominic Dale faced Xiao Gundong -who was in serious pain from a broken hand- His snooker was very respectable and he was a tough player against Dale, who is back in form. Xiao beat the Space-man 4-2.

Jack Lisowski was the only player who managed to face the baize again in Ireland. He beat fellow South West Snooker Academy player Barry Hawkins 4-3, in a close run battle- nothing quite like a final frame decide to put your skills to the test.

Jack 20, played incredibly well putting to bed his recent bad form. Last season had been a very positive one for Jack but this season has been one of stress for the youngster as he failed to shine, in the way he wanted to. Hopefully now that bad form is over and now he is on the right path to succeed, in the remaining season. He was also lucky to have the support of his flat mate Judd Trump, who watched from the audience





Martin Gould was next to pay a sweeping visit. He met Stephen Lee, who has found his form recently before he out played Martin. Martin had said before the event, that he hoped he could end his bad form.

Better luck next time Martin, Lee won 4-0



Thursday arrived and Jack Lisowski play World Champion Neil Robertson. Robertson showed serious skill against the talented youngster and took the session 4-2.

Michael Holt faced Stephen Lee, who once again played as exceptional game keeping Holt to one frame, while he ran away at 4-1.

Thursday also saw John Higgins getting beaten by Jamie Jones in a close 4-3 battle, a great win for Jamie, which will surely improve his Confidence no end.

As the quarter finals loomed Xiao Gundong, started to look like a strong contender for winner. Especially after his saw off Judd Trump 4-2 the previous day. His run to the winning line was cut short, as he met his match in Andrew Higginson who took the session 4-1.

Mark Selby had competently seen off Ding Jun Hui 4-1, his next competitor was Stephen Lee, who appeared to be growing more confident each second he spent at the table. World Number One Selby could do nothing and was beaten 4-0.



Robertson put an end to Joe Perry's hope of a grand finals success beating him 4-1. While Stephen Maguire had a close run battle with to beat Rcky Walden is the close match 4-3.





Sunday evening the finals approached Robertson, who had played some fantastic snooker; was placed against Stephen Lee. Lee was ready to fight for the win, after his close run battle against Mark Allen in China, he deserved to lift the trophy.

Stephen played a nice steady game and took from control from the outset, beating the Aussie hunk 4-0.

The win is Stephen's first in six years, he looks to be a strong threat once again.





# NEXT ISSUE

Preview of the World championships

Martin Gould Talks about his 2011/2012

Shaun Murphy's Half Marathon preparation

A closer look at Neil Robertson

Words by Rachael Rodgers Editor

Photo's taken by Monique Limbos

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