

'I'M CONSTANTLY FIGHTING OFF THIS DEMON INSIDE ME'

2010 WORLD 8-BALL CHAMPION KARL BOYES OPENS UP ABOUT WINNING THE WORLD TITLE AND HOW HARD IT IS TO STAY ON TOP IN THE PRO GAME.



For Karl Boyes, winning the World 8-ball title in 2010 fulfilled a lifelong dream for the talented Englishman. The 29 year old from Blackpool began his billiard career when he was 14 years old playing English 8-ball, a game similar to American 8-ball but played on smaller tables and with red and yellow balls. He played the sport for nearly 10 years and became one of the top players.

Boyes turned to American pool when International Pool Tour came along in 2004, offering huge prize funds and 8-ball as the game of choice. When the IPT folded a few years later, Boyes decided to stick with the American game of pool, and quickly became an elite player in the pro ranks.

In 2007 he made it all the way to the semi-finals of the World 9-ball Championship in Manila. 2010 was Boyes' breakout year. He won the World 8-ball title with a nail biting 13-12 victory over Holland's Feijen. Boyes was a member of Team England which won the World Team Championship in Germany. Later that same year, he made it to European Mosconi Cup team, and played brilliantly in helping Team Europe capture the prestigious team cup.

From that high he saw his game slip in 2011, falling to 32nd in the WPA world rankings. Boyes says his focus shifted after he and his girlfriend had their first child. He also said he's been grappling lately with a 'pool demon,' that intangible nagging voice that many pros in this brutally tough sport often have to deal with.

WPA Press Officer Ted Lerner recently caught with the personable Boyes and got his views on his career, that persistent pool demon, what it's like to play 8-ball at the elite level, and his chances at next week's World 8-ball championship in Fujairah, UAE.

TL: How did being an English 8-ball player help you adjust to playing American 8-ball?

KB: Well with me growing up playing 8-ball it is obviously my best game so it was just a case of learning how the cues, balls, and table play as it's all different sizes.

TL: What did it feel like when you won the World 8-ball championship?

KB: It felt like a relief to be honest. People through your life tell you you're going to be a world champion so when you finally do this it's a great sense of achievement. Also to win the 8-ball world championship is even more special as it's the game I grew up playing.

TL: What's the most pressure you've ever felt at the pool table or in a tournament?

KB: There's a few occasions really but the ones that stand out are at 12-12 in the World 8-ball final (vs. Niels Feijen) because I sort of threw a great chance away at 12-10 so I thought I had blown it. Also the World Team Championships final where I played Lee Van Corteza and it was hill-hill and it was a massive point for the team. And probably the biggest of them all was the Mosconi Cup in London as its live TV and your part of a team.

TL: You had a really great year in 2010, but not quite as successful in 2011. What changed in your game last year? How will you turn things around this year?

KB: Well in 2010 I was 80% focused on pool and showed exactly what Karl Boyes is capable of. And this was still with a little demon inside me that hates what pool is about. In 2011 Me and my girlfriend had our first child and pool took a big back step and that little demon really took over my head. Now in 2012 it will again be a difficult year but with the help of my family and sponsors I hope to do better but again I'm constantly fighting off this demon inside me, Other pool players seem to handle all the crap better than I do. Whether that's good on them or good for me who knows? We shall see what the future holds for Karl Boyes the pool player.

TL: How do you think you'll do in this year's World 8-ball championship?



KB: Last year I felt really confident and was playing good pool. Then in the last 64 I had one shot so who knows? Maybe you could tell me?(*he laughs*) I have practiced hard for this but it's(the World 8-ball Championship) such a toss of the coin tournament like most pool tournaments.

TL: Millions of people around the world play 8-ball in bars and pubs and pool halls for fun. Of course the rules are the same but as a game, what's the difference between recreational 8-ball and professional 8-ball?

KB: Well it's all down to taking out the rack/clearance the best possible way. Most amateurs will just try pot the balls as where in 8-ball you should try work back from the 8-ball to work out your best pattern.

TL: What's the hardest thing about 8-ball at the pro level?

KB: The hardest thing about 8-ball at the pro level is it's a little too easy on the equipment we play on. The pockets should be 4 inches maybe slightly smaller. Then the patterns would really show up etc. and I'd win it every year then.(*He laughs*).

TL: What do you love about 8-ball?

KB:My main love of 8-ball is when your opponent makes a mistake you should win a large percentage of the racks as opposed to in rotation games(9-ball and 10-ball) where a lot of luck can still help the weaker player.

***The 2012 World 8-ball Championship begins in Fujairah, United Arab Emirates on Monday, February 13th and runs through to February 17th. The WPA will be providing up to the minute coverage of all the happenings on its website, www.wpa-pool.com. WPA Press Officer Ted Lerner will be on hand in Fujairah bringing you all the action with live scoring of all matches, in depth articles on the goings on posted several times a day, as well as blow by blow coverage of big matches via the WPA's Twitter page, @poolwpa.**

****The World Pool and Billiard Association(WPA) is the world governing body of the sport of pool. The WPA is also the member organization for pool of the [World Confederation of Billiard Sports](http://www.wcbs.com) (WCBS), the international umbrella organization encompassing all the major [cue sports](http://www.cue-sports.com).**

WHERE KINGS ARE CROWNED

THE 2012 WPA WORLD 8-BALL CHAMPIONSHIP BEGINS MONDAY IN THE ONLY PLACE TO EVER HOLD THE EVENT..FUJAIRAH, UNITED ARAB EMIRATES.



BY TED

LERNER

The international pool scene finally kicks off this February as the best pool players from all corners of the globe descend upon the mountainous emirate of Fujairah in the United Arab Emirates to contest the WPA 2012 World 8-ball Championship.

The tournament will begin Monday Feb. 13 and run through the final on Feb. 17 at the Expo Centre in central Fujairah and offers a total of \$156,000 in prize money with \$20,000 going to the winner. A stellar cast of 96 pool greats will make up the main field beginning on the 13th.

Fujairah is one of the seven emirates that make up the United Arab Emirates, and the only one on the Gulf of Oman in the country's east instead of on the Persian Gulf (the other six emirates). Fujairah is the youngest of the seven emirates that make up the country. It is located in the central part of the Al Hajar Mountains. The capital of the emirate is the city of Fujairah.

The American game of 8-ball is arguably the world's most popular and widely played cue sport, played and enjoyed by millions around the world every day. Interestingly this year marks only the 7th time that the WPA 8-ball World Championship has ever been contested, and all in Fujairah. The list of champions may be short, but they read like a who's who of great pool players.

The first winner of the World 8-ball Championship back in 2005 was none other than the legend, Efren "Bata" Reyes of the Philippines. In 2006, 16 year old Taiwanese sensation Wu Chia Ching won the 8-ball world title just months after miraculously winning the World 9-ball Championship. The Philippines' Ronnie Alcano captured the crown in 2007 also right after winning the World 9-ball Championship. The following year saw German great Ralf Souquet win his first world 8-ball title.

The tournament was not played in 2009. England's Karl Boyes won the 2010 title with a nail biting 13-12 win over the Netherlands' Niels Feijen.



Leading the pack this year will be the defending champion and current world #1 and 2011 WPA Player of the Year, Dennis Orcullo of the Philippines. Orcullo won his first world title last year in Fujairah when he beat Feijen in the final 10-3. Orcullo used that amazing victory as a springboard for a sensational all around year in 2011.

Orcullo certainly comes into this year's championship as one of the heavy favorites but he will surely have all he can handle from the expected all star cast on hand. As of press time most of the world's top 36 players have confirmed participation and more will surely be added in the coming week. Among those are World 9-ball champion and world number 2 Yukio Akagariyama of Japan, current and back to back US Open Champion Darren Appleton(world #3) of the UK, World 10-ball Champion Huidji See(World # 5) of the Netherlands, back to back runner up Feijen, the Philippine great and World # 6 Lee Van Corteza, Chinese Taipei's Chang Jung Lin(# 7), China Open winner Chris Melling(# 8) of the UK, German greats Souquet(#11) and Thorsten Hohmann(13), and Finnish star Mika Immonen(19).

Of course, one of the perennial excitements in any world championship are the unknowns who invariably leap out of obscurity and make a run for the title. Pay attention especially to the various unknown Filipino players who ply their trade as house pros in pool halls and training centers throughout the UAE, Qatar, Saudi and other places where pool is growing around the Middle East. Not only can these Filipino players play world class pool, they are comfortable in the local surroundings and culture.

A change in the format this year will surely please the players as all matches throughout the championship will be played in the alternate break format. This change has been implemented in order to stop the blowouts which had been happening with regular frequency over the last few years.

There is no live international television coverage of the 2012 World 8-ball championship. However, the WPA will be providing up to the minute coverage on our website, www.wpa-pool.com. We will be on hand in Fujairah bringing you all the action with live scoring of all matches, in depth articles on the goings on posted several times a day, as well as blow by blow coverage of big matches via the WPA's Twitter page, @poolwpa.

DATES:

12 – 17 February

PRIZE MONEY:

USD 156,800

Breakdown:

Winner \$20,000

Runner-up \$15,000

Semi Finalist \$7,500

Quarter Finalist \$4,500

9th – 16th \$3,000

17th – 32nd \$2,000

33rd – 64th \$900

65th – 80th \$250

FORMAT:

96 Players

Stage 1 Double Elimination Race to 7 - Alternate break

Stage 2 Single Elimination Race to 9 - Alternate break

VENUE:

Fujairah Tennis Club, Fujairah

Daily Schedule(All times GMT +4 hours)

13 & 14 February **Group play** 12.00pm 2.00pm 4.00pm 6.00pm 8.00pm 10.00pm

15 February **Final 64** 2.00 pm 4.00pm

6.00pm 8.00pm

16 February **Final 32** 2.00pm 4.00pm

Final 16 7.00pm

Quarter Finals 10.00pm

17 February **Semi Finals** 2.00pm

Final 6.00pm

Closing awards immediately after the final

Confirmed Players as of Feb. 6, 2012

Dennis Orcullo	PHI
Yukio Akagariyama	JPN
Darren Appleton	GBR
Roberto Gomez	PHI
Huidji See	NED
Lee Van Corteza	PHI
Jung Lin Chang	TPE
Chris Melling	GBR
Antonio Lining	PHI
Ralf Souquet	GER
Niels Feijen	NED
Thorsten Hohmann	GER
Daryl Peach	GBR
Yu Lung Chang	TPE
Carlo Blado	PHI
Hewen Li	CHN
Chi Ho Kwok	HKG

Sayeem Hossaien	BAN
Keng Kwang Chan	SIN
Yong Hwang	KOR
Toru Kuribayashi	JPN
Sundeep Gulati	IND
Phuc Long Nguyen	VIE
Allan Cuarteno	PHI
Ryoji Aoki	JPN
Pin Yi Ko	TPE
Po Cheng Kuo	TPE
Chen Man Lee	HKG
Dominic Jentsch	GER
Reiner Wirsbitzki	GER
Carlos Cabello	ESP
Francisco Diaz-Pizzaro	ESP
Marcus Chamat	SWE
Bruno Muratore	ITA
Tomasz Kaplan	POL
Albin Ouschan	AUT
Nick Van Den Berg	NED
Serge Das	BEL
Stepanov Konstantin	RUS
Bahram Lofty	DEN
Jason Shaw	GBR
Karl Boyes	GBR
Mark Gray	GBR
Dennis Grabe	EST
Brandon Shuff	USA
Hunter Lombardo	USA
Max Eberle	USA
Harvey Shognas	CAN
Westi Morake	RSA
Hamza Ali	ERI
Mohamed Elassal	EGY
Juan Mairena	NIC
Jalal Yousef	VEN
Stuart Lawler	AUS
Mohammed Saed Saed	QAT
Meshaal Turki Al-Ali	QAT
Mohammad Khaled Soufi	SYR
Omar Abdelhamid Aishaheen	KUW
Takhti Zarekani	IRI
Hani Al-Houri	UAE
Yousfi Chaouki	MAR
Mika Immonen	FIN
Haitai Liu	CHN
Jianbo Fu	CHN
Mario He	AUT
Radoslaw Babica	POL
Karol Skowerski	POL
Oliver Ortmann	GER
Carlo Dalmatin	CRO