

SPORTING LEGENDS: STEVE DAVIS

SPORT: SNOOKER

COMPETITIVE ERA: 1978 - PRESENT

Steve Davis OBE (born August 22, 1957) is an English professional snooker player, widely considered to be one of the greatest players of all time.



During the 1980s he raised the standard of play with a dominating influence similar to Ray Reardon before him and Stephen Hendry after him. Having turned professional in 1978, Davis won the World Snooker Championship six times during the 1980s (1981, 1983, 1984, 1987, 1988 and 1989), a record at the time.

He also won the game's second most prestigious title, the UK Championship, a record six times in 1980, 1981, 1984, 1985, 1986 and 1987. Despite not repeating his earlier successes following the rise of Stephen Hendry in the early 1990s, Davis has remained one of the world's leading and popular players well into the 2000s.

Perhaps his most famous match however was the 1985 final versus Dennis Taylor. In a nail-biting match that saw a record post-midnight audience on British television and a record audience for BBC2 of 18 million people, Taylor finally defeated Davis 18 frames to 17, winning the final frame on the final ball.

Davis completed the most crushing World Championship victory in the modern era when he defeated John Parrott 18-3 in 1989. By 2004, he had won 73 titles, 28 of them in ranking events. In 2005 he enjoyed an up-turn in form, reaching the quarter finals of the World Championship before losing to eventual winner Shaun Murphy.

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The Golden Nugget on his way to another 100+ break .

He reached his 100th career final by beating Hendry (for the first time in twelve years) 9-6 at the UK Championship in December 2005. In the final he met the rising Chinese star, Ding Junhui, who is thirty years his junior - equalling the largest-ever disparity in ages between ranking tournament finalists - but lost by ten frames to six.

Davis became known for his coolness and impeccable conduct in high-pressure situations, earning himself the nickname The Nugget. His featureless expressions and monotone interviewing style earned him a reputation as boring. As a result, the satirical television series Spitting Image gave him the ironic nickname, Steve 'Interesting' Davis.

Davis himself has long played upon this image, particularly as a pundit and commentator for the BBC's snooker coverage and as a guest on television quizzes, with an appealing line in deadpan humour.

In 1988, Davis was named the BBC Sports Personality of the Year. The same year he was made an MBE. He was awarded an OBE in 2001. He is currently honorary president of the Snooker Writers' Association.

Davis has taken up his non-snooker interests in the public arena too. In 1983, he hosted The Steve Davis Sports Quiz for Channel 4 and later networked a soul show for commercial radio stations, titled Steve Davis' Interesting Soul.

Recently, Davis has begun to play pool professionally and is responsible for the institution of the Mosconi Cup, a multi-day competition between teams from the USA and Europe, inspired by and roughly based on the format of the Ryder Cup.

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Scott Burton's Final Thought

Steve Davis was the best snooker player of his generation.

His six world titles is testament to this fact, and set the standards for the likes of Stephen Hendry and Ronnie O'Sullivan to follow.

For all of his wins, Davis was also very humble and gracious in defeat, especially so after his world championship final defeats to Dennis Taylor (1985) and Joe Johnson (1986).

His attitude with regards to admitting defeat was very good and that is the sign of a great champion.



Steve Davis WAS the face of snooker during the 1980s.