

# Final line-up of stars confirmed for 2026 Bahrain Darts Masters

● **World Championship runner-up Gian van Veen, former World Matchplay champion Nathan Aspinall and Dutch star Danny Noppert confirmed for Bahrain**

● **Line-up now complete of international stars for Bahrain, which include newly crowned two-time World Champion Luke Littler and defending Bahrain Darts Masters Champion Stephen Bunting**

● **Grandstand tickets still available for the event next week at Terminal 4 by Beyon, Exhibition World Bahrain**

**Manama**

The final names have now been confirmed for the Bahrain Darts Masters as World Championship runner-up Gian van Veen, former World Matchplay champion Nathan Aspinall and Dutch star Danny Noppert completed the eight international stars confirmed for Bahrain next week.

The 2026 World Series of Darts will begin with the fourth edition of the Bahrain Darts Masters on January 15-16, as newly crowned two-time World Champion Luke Littler will take centre stage, having celebrated victory on his World Series debut in Bahrain back in 2024.

The teenage sensation will be joined in Bahrain by seven other PDC superstars - including 2023/24 World Champion Luke Humphries and World Championship runner-up Gian van Veen. European Champion Van Veen will feature alongside his fellow countryman Michael van Gerwen - the most successful player in World Series of Darts history.

Reigning Bahrain Darts Mas-



Luke Littler

ters champion Stephen Bunting will be aiming to build upon his impressive World Series performances in 2025, as 2020/21 World Champion Gerwyn Price makes his World Series return. The eight-player PDC line-up is

completed by Dutch star Danny Noppert - who featured in four televised ranking semi-finals in 2025 - and former World Matchplay champion Nathan Aspinall.

Each event will see the eight

PDC superstars take on eight Asian representatives in round one. The Asian representatives for the Bahrain Darts Masters include six players from the PDC Asian Tour who competed at the World Championship, headlined

by Filipino stars Alexis Toylo and Lourence Ilagan.

Japanese duo Motomu Sakai and Ryusei Azemoto also feature, as Singapore's darting icon Paul Lim graces the big stage along with Hong Kong's World Cup quarter-finalist Man Lok Leung.

Completing the 16-player field will be Bahrain duo Abdulla Saeed and Basem Mahmood, who prevailed in last month's Bahrain Qualifiers to confirm their World Series of Darts returns.

The Bahrain Darts Masters is organised by BIC, the PDC and sports promoter CBX, and is supported by Bahrain Tourism and Exhibitions Authority.

Tickets for the event are still available to the all-new Bahrain Darts Masters Grandstand, but fans must act fast and purchase theirs at the soonest to avoid missing out on one of the most highly sought-after occasions in the new year.

All tables, including Premium and VIP areas for the 2026 Bahrain Darts Masters, have already completely sold out, but darts enthusiasts can still experience the magic of the game at the Bahrain Darts Masters Grandstand, which offers an incredible

**Competing Players**

**PDC Representatives**

- Luke Littler (England)**
- Luke Humphries (England)**
- Gian van Veen (Netherlands)**
- Michael van Gerwen (Netherlands)**
- Stephen Bunting (England)**
- Danny Noppert (Netherlands)**
- Gerwyn Price (Wales)**
- Nathan Aspinall (England)**

**Asian Representatives**

- Alexis Toylo (Philippines)**
- Lourence Ilagan (Philippines)**
- Motomu Sakai (Japan)**
- Ryusei Azemoto (Japan)**
- Paul Lim (Singapore)**
- Man Lok Leung (Hong Kong)**
- Abdulla Saeed (Bahrain)**
- Basem Mahmood (Bahrain)**



Luke Humphries



Gian van Veen

view of the stage, as well as close access to food and beverage areas at the venue.

Tickets to the Bahrain Darts Masters Grandstand are BD25 apiece for the two days. All available ticket options can be found online at bahraingp.com or by calling the BIC Hotline on +973-17450000.

The game of darts has become an international phenomenon in recent years, and in the Kingdom, the Bahrain Darts Masters has grown tremendously over the past three seasons it has been held. The event has been moved to Terminal 4 by Beyon to be able to accommodate the massive crowd expected, and the venue will be transformed into Bahrain's answer to the iconic Alexandra Palace.

Fans can expect an incredible atmosphere, with fancy dress, themed activations, and a wide range of food and beverage options as 'Sport's Biggest Party' brings its unique flavour to Bahrain.

For more information on the 2026 Bahrain Darts Masters or other events and activities at BIC, visit bahraingp.com, call the BIC Hotline, or follow the circuit's official social media channels.

## Slot says Liverpool can still do 'special things' ahead of Arsenal clash

**AFP | London**

Liverpool manager Arne Slot insists his reigning English champions can still do "special things" this season as they prepare to face Premier League leaders Arsenal following a faltering start to their title defence.

Slot's men head to the Emirates for Thursday's clash in fourth place in the table, but 14 points adrift of the Gunners.

However, following on from a run of nine defeats in 12 games in all competitions, Liverpool



Arne Slot

are unbeaten in their last nine -- although that sequence includes four draws.

Those draws include a goal-

less stalemate against Leeds and a 2-2 share of the spoils with Fulham in their first two Premier League fixtures of 2026.

"It is nine games unbeaten but we have definitely had two draws too many," Slot told a pre-match press conference yesterday.

Slot, who guided Liverpool to an impressive title triumph in his first season in charge at Anfield after succeeding Jurgen Klopp, added: "Where are we? I think I've said so many times that the answer to that question

is we aren't where we want to be, but I feel we have a very talented squad.

"If everyone's available and ready, then I think we can do special things."

**'A lot to play for'**

They certainly gave that impression earlier in the season when Liverpool beat Arsenal 1-0 at Anfield in August.

However, a crisis up front, in terms of personnel, casts doubt over their achieving the double over the Gunners.

Hugo Ekitike is a major doubt after missing the Fulham draw because of a hamstring problem.

The Reds are also without Alexander Isak through injury, while Mohamed Salah remains at the Africa Cup of Nations with Egypt.

Slot said he hoped his side would become more consistent.

"We haven't had the consistency but we've already beaten some very good teams, so that tells you the talent is definitely there but the consistency isn't," he said.

They have recorded some notable victories, home successes against Real Madrid and Atletico Madrid and a 5-1 romp away to Eintracht Frankfurt in the Champions League.

But on the flip side, Liverpool have suffered three-goal defeats at home three times this season, against Crystal Palace, Nottingham Forest and PSV Eindhoven.

"This club has shown so many times that when they don't have the greatest form in the league, they are still able to win other trophies," said Slot.