



Ryan Hart Interview: Fighting Game Legend Offers Valuable Tips For Esports Players And Aspiring Professionals

In our latest interview, we sat down with fighting game legend Ryan Hart to ask about his illustrious playing career, how he got to where he is today and what his most memorable moments have been.

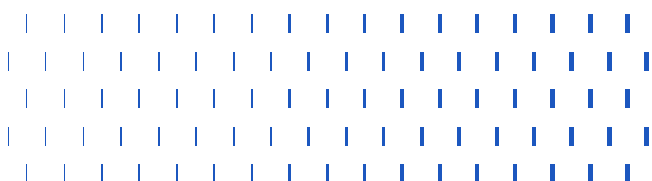
Ryan is one of the most experienced esports players from the UK of all time and revealed many pearls of wisdom in this in-depth one-hour interview. The full VoD can be viewed below along with some of our choice quotes.

How He Got Into Games

Ryan got into gaming when he played a Golden Axe arcade in a local mini-cab station when he was a boy. He then went on to play competitively, winning tournaments in early fighting games like Tekken 2 in the mid-90s, moving to King of Fighters, Street Fighter and Virtua Fighter.

"With each iteration I'd win the national, European or world championship for each game. So before I knew it I was a champion at multiple games, but it was never the plan to be that way."

"When I first played Golden Axe it just jumped out at me. Pushing a button and it making a move on the screen was mind-blowing as a ten-year-old."



On One Of His Most Memorable Moments – And The Value Of Sharing Knowledge

Ryan said he has many memories in his playing career and it's hard to pick just one. However, the time he beat the Korean Tekken champion sticks by him. Specifically, when Ryan asked other UK players about Ryan's own strengths and weaknesses (in order to improve before the finals).

"They valued that even though I could beat them, I still had a place for learning from them within me," he said.

I think it's a big strength to know that people are not necessarily better than you can still teach you things, and people you can't beat in a game is not an indication of you not being able to teach them something. You can always share knowledge throughout.

"So I became the first ever Western player to beat a Korean champion on Tekken."

Building A Brand On Social Media And Making Mistakes

Ryan spoke about the challenges of building a brand through social media and online nowadays, as an esports professional – something that wasn't as prevalent when he was up and coming as platforms like Twitter didn't exist.

"I think for up and coming gamers it's important to support them and for them to know it's okay to make mistakes, no matter the age. It's okay to be human."

"Social media is something the world is still new to. You're introduced to this world of millions of people you know or don't know, and can't see, their thoughts and feelings have to be digested within your system around how you feel and your emotional state. That's a very difficult concoction. Then you have young talented players with no social media experience, so you can have a spillage of emotions sometimes and that can often backfire. And I speak from experience there too."

Be Vigilant When It Comes To Contracts

Esports players should be aware of sponsors and teams trying to make a fast buck and to make sure they sign deals that are right for them, Ryan said.

"I've seen so many gaming companies get into esports but their interests were corrupt, they wanted to make a fast buck and didn't want to do things. It's not nice and it's one area kids these days should be warned about."

"I've had personal experience in that, I haven't been given my value in a lot of teams. Get the right advice and don't be taken advantage of."

Focus On Having Fun, Not Just Winning

"If you're having fun, then no matter what happens then you'll enjoy the journey," Ryan commented.

"If the only thing you're after is the gold medal, then if you don't get it, it's going to be quite a sad journey. That long path to failure is really hard to deal with."

"It's important to emphasise that enjoyment is key here. And like in any job, if you enjoy it, you produce better results, you're wanting, you're willing, the hunger means more based on your passion around the game, not just on how much money you're making."

