



## Professional Disc Golf Association

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### 2004 PDGA International Proposal

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Attachments:

Master List of International PDGA Members by Region/Country

2004 Affiliated International Partner Memberships Form

2004 Individual International Member Form

2004 International Electronic TD Report (Draft)

### 1. Introduction

This document presents a coherent and integrated strategy for developing the PDGA's relations with international disc golf associations, events, and players in 2004 and beyond. For the purposes of this discussion, the term "international" refers to all countries outside of the USA and Canada, where the PDGA and the PDGA Tour are based.

Around the world, disc golf continues to grow steadily and significantly, both as a low-cost recreational activity and as a competitive sport. There are now more than 1500 courses worldwide, including 1250+ in the USA and Canada, 150+ in Europe, and about 60 in Japan/Australia/New Zealand. In 2003, the PDGA listed over 8,300 players in its current membership, and the PDGA Tour sanctioned more than 500 events with almost 40,000 total participants and a Tour Pro Purse totaling \$1.2 million. In Europe, disc golf associations in Sweden, Great Britain and Finland have well-organized national tours, and other countries are developing the same. Collectively their leaders present the annual EuroTour which culminates in the biennial European Championships. In Australia, New Zealand and Taiwan, disc golf is now formally organized and expanding out from a core group of players. With activity beginning to grow in areas such as Eastern Europe, South Africa, China, Malaysia, and Brasil, it is clear that disc golf is becoming global.

While the 2001 World Games in Akita Japan were a major success in terms of coordination and cooperation between WFDF, PDGA, the JPDGA as hosts, and the participating countries, the ongoing organization of disc golf internationally remains relatively underdeveloped. Beyond the exchange of emails and ideas, and modest support in the form of Innovation Grants, Information Kits, and on-line resources, the PDGA's direct involvement with Europe and other countries has been largely limited to the overseas players traveling to the USA to play in PDGA Worlds and the USDGC. Current European PDGA members

number less than 50 and few PDGA Tour players have traveled to Europe in recent years. In 1996 and 1999 the Culture Clash brought together USA and International teams in a highly entertaining Ryder Cup style event, however attempts to organize a 3<sup>rd</sup> edition of this event in 2001 proved unsuccessful.

The PDGA's working relations continue to be closest with Japan and the JPDGA. There are several reasons for this including the history of the Japan Open as a prestigious international event, the 2001 World Games, the leadership and involvement of Hero Kobo, Sam Ferrans, and Crazy John Brooks in growing disc golf in Japan, and the fact that for many years the JPDGA has sent a team of 10-15 players to PDGA Worlds. Since 1999, the JPDGA and the PDGA have also had a country-level membership system in place, as discussed below, and the 2004 Japan Open has accepted the PDGA's offer of international SuperTour status and support. It is evident that the JPDGA holds its partnership with the PDGA in high regard and that both sides benefit from increased cooperation.

It is the PDGA's hope that similar relationships can now be formalized with other country associations. In recent months, the need for international coordination to increase and for the PDGA to play the leading role has been voiced by several other international leaders, including Jonas Lof (Sweden), who wrote:

"Disc golf is a sport with huge potential but there is a lack of development around the world. The only realistic power to keep the disc golf community together is the PDGA. The PDGA has contacts in other countries, but this cooperation could work much better."

## **2. Goals**

The goals of this proposal are:

- to increase the organization and growth of disc golf worldwide
- to foster closer relations between the PDGA and international disc golf associations, events, and players
- to develop a long-term framework for international coordination and decision making

## **3. PDGA Affiliated Associations**

The cornerstone of this strategy for growing disc golf internationally is the building of partnerships between the PDGA and international Disc Golf Associations, both at the country and at the continental or regional level. Examples of potential partners include the British DGA, the Swedish DGA, the newly formed Australian DGA, the South African DGA, and others. At the country level, these relations would focus on growing PDGA memberships and integrating tournaments into a global system of PDGA Tour and PDGA affiliated events. Basic agreements would be developed and signed, outlining these relations, each side's responsibilities, and the support and resources to be provided by the PDGA.

Each partner association will have a PDGA Country Coordinator, to be elected or appointed by the country association's current membership or leadership. The Country Coordinator will be similar to the PDGA State Coordinator, serving as principal liaison with the PDGA and replacing the existing "Country Contact." The roles and responsibilities of PDGA Country Coordinators will include:

- assembly and submission of PDGA country memberships and event results assembly and submission of PDGA country memberships and event results
- updating country information in the PDGA Course Directory
- participation in PDGA core group e-mail discussions on current disc golf topics
- ongoing communication with the PDGA regarding country issues and priorities including identification of specific areas of PDGA support
- coordination of PDGA support and activity in country.

In terms of PDGA support and benefits to the partner association this would include:

- individual membership benefits as discussed below
- development of a dedicated international section at [www.pdga.com](http://www.pdga.com) with linkages to country websites and information

- calculation of World Class Par for courses played in PDGA affiliated events
- access to PDGA resources, including course design, event management, marketing and sponsorship materials
- training in small sized sports player association management
- rights to use PDGA name and logos

#### **4. PDGA International Committee**

As part of this proposal the PDGA will be forming an International Committee in 2004, consisting of:

- Three (3) permanent voting members:
  - a) PDGA Commissioner,
  - b) PDGA Competition Director, and
  - c) PDGA Executive Director
- One (1) voting member from each affiliated country Disc Golf Association that has at least 20 PDGA paid members. This representative would be chosen by the country Disc Golf Association and would serve two (2) year terms, as long as their association maintained this level of member representation. Country Coordinators would be obvious candidates for serving on this Committee.
- One (1) non-voting member from each affiliated country Disc Golf Association that has less than 20 PDGA paid members. This representative would be chosen by the country Disc Golf Association and would serve two (2) year terms, as long as their association maintained minimum representation.

Once established, the PDGA will set up an email group to facilitate ongoing Committee discussions. A goal would be for the International Committee to hold its first in-person meeting at the PDGA Worlds in Iowa in August 2004, with representatives from 2-3 European countries, Japan, and Australia/New Zealand in attendance.

This group would have balanced representation from the international community working in concert with the PDGA, while providing the PDGA with stronger representation in line with its much larger active membership. In order to ensure that the interests of the PDGA remain in focus, the PDGA Commissioner would have an overriding veto over this committee.

The PDGA International Committee would lead on such issues as:

- Internationalization of disc golf standards, including equipment, Rules of Play and course design. Translation of same into different languages.
- Synchronization of tournament standards including basic event organization, divisions, player ratings, point systems, pay tables, etc.
- Coordination of leading International events, i.e. World Games, PDGA World Championships held outside of North America
- International player qualification for PDGA Worlds
- Ongoing review and design of PDGA international relations and support

#### **5. PDGA International Memberships**

##### EXISTING SYSTEM:

For several years there have been two (2) PDGA international member systems in place, one with the JPDGA, and one with individual members from all other countries. In 2003 the general PDGA membership fee system for international countries was: Pro with magazine \$60, Pro NO magazine \$30, Amateur/Junior with magazine \$40, Amateur/Junior NO magazine \$10. For these fees players received member cards, rulebooks, stickers, new member discs and minis, information, election ballots, the right to participate in all PDGA Tour events including Worlds, and the tracking of their player statistics on the PDGA database include player ratings.

In terms of Japan, since 1998 the JPDGA/PDGA fee structure has been \$5 to renew or \$20 for a new membership, plus \$5 for the right to play in PDGA Tour events in North America including Worlds. The JPDGA also has a bulk subscription of 50 magazines with Disc Golf World News, therefore the magazine is

not built into the Japan PDGA membership prices. Each year the PDGA fulfils the JPDGA memberships by sending a box of member cards, rule books, stickers, new member discs and minis, and PDGA tour and disc golf information to the JPDGA, who distribute these items to their members.

# of PDGA Members in 2003:

Japan 107, Sweden 9, Finland 8, Germany 6, Australia 5, Denmark 3, Belgium England Holland New Zealand Norway 2 each, Singapore 1, Estonia France Ireland Malaysia Switzerland Taiwan have all had 1 or more PDGA members in recent years but had 0 in 2003.

Costs of PDGA magazine:

The *Disc Golf World News* magazine costs the PDGA about \$3 per copy or \$12 per annual subscription (4 issues). The cost of airmailing the magazine overseas is \$7.50 per single copy or \$30 per annual subscription. Therefore, the total cost to the PDGA of one annual international magazine subscription is \$42. These costs, however, can be reduced: 3-5 copies of the magazine mailed together in the same envelope only cost \$10 by Global Priority Mail, 6-10 copies cost \$20. This represents a potential savings in postage of \$15-\$20 per subscriber. The alternative is for countries to make their own direct arrangement with DGWN for a larger bulk mailing, as the JPDGA has done.

#### PROPOSED 2004 INTERNATIONAL PDGA MEMBERSHIP SYSTEM:

1. Each country association to have its own membership system with national fees and the options for members to pay basic PDGA International Membership and PDGA North American Touring Player fees. Countries such as Japan and Britain already have well-established membership systems in place. Countries that do not have a formal association and/or a membership structure are also encouraged to affiliate and register their players as international members with the PDGA in 2004, and to seek advice from the PDGA and other countries in building their associations. By developing their own national membership systems and by affiliating with the PDGA, countries will also be strengthening their own organizational and financial capabilities.
2. The PDGA Country Coordinator will be responsible for collecting PDGA memberships and forwarding the information and funds to the PDGA, as part of that country's annual membership drive. Please see the Affiliated International Partner memberships form attached.
3. Host Country Association Fees will be determined by hosts.
4. PDGA Membership Fees:
  - US\$10 – 2004 PDGA International Membership  
Receives member card, sticker, information, rulesbook, right to play in all country and regional (ie EuroTour) PDGA affiliated events, the right to play in PDGA World Championships (subject to player qualification), and tracking of player rating.
  - US\$10 – 2004 PDGA North American Touring Player  
Right to play in all other PDGA North America Tour events including National Tour and United States Championship events.
  - US\$10 – New member discs. For this fee a new first time PDGA member receives a PDGA logo disc and a new member # mini disc.
  - US\$25 – Annual DGWN Magazine subscription, including postage. 3 or more subscriptions required to maintain this discounted rate. Magazines will be mailed to country association for distribution to members.

Notes:

Each affiliated country association will also be given an ongoing complementary PDGA membership and magazine subscription.

Beyond the costs of magazine subscriptions, the 2004 PDGA international membership price structure represents a subsidy when compared to USA and Canada member fees, in terms of overall benefits

and costs, and in providing a common set of fees for Pros Amateurs and Juniors. This PDGA subsidy is justified by the broader goal of increasing international disc golf, towards which these funds will be used.

Because countries are at different stages in their organization and development, and in order to encourage international memberships, the PDGA will continue to offer both the affiliated country membership and the standard individual international membership. That being said, the discounted affiliated country membership system is a key component of this broader international proposal, and all countries with the capability to organize and manage this system are encouraged to begin implementation in 2004.

5. 2004 Standard Individual International Membership (All Divisions and Age Groups). Available at [www.pdgastore.com](http://www.pdgastore.com) or see attached individual membership form.

Renewal with airmail magazine - \$60  
Renewal NO magazine - \$20  
New member with airmail magazine - \$70  
New member NO magazine - \$30

International players who renew individually under this fee structure will receive all the benefits listed above including the right to participate in all PDGA Tour and PDGA affiliated International events. New international members who pay individually receive the PDGA logo disc and the new member mini.

Note:

The following 2004 PDGA membership options are the same price for all countries, including North America, and all membership types: Ace Club \$150 (receive magazine, Ace Club shirt and personalized disc); Birdie Club \$100 (receive magazine and personalized Birdie Club disc).

## 6. PDGA International Events

Another key component of this proposal is the strengthening of relations between the PDGA and international disc golf events.

Beginning in 2004, the PDGA will record results and calculate player and course ratings for all approved affiliated association events upon submission of event results to the PDGA office by the Country Coordinator using the 2004 International Electronic TD Report (see Draft document attached). These tournament related services and the work involved would be one of the key benefits that international players receive, as funded by their local country and PDGA membership fees.

Events that could be listed on the 2004 PDGA International Calendar include:

- o all EuroTour events
- o European PDGA affiliated country association tour events (ie the Finnish tour)
- o all JPDGA Tour events
- o Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, Taiwan National Championships

Per the PDGA Tour model, host country associations organizing these events are encouraged to develop their own systems of event player and sanctioning fees as a principal source of income, to be used in support of these events and their national programs. As part of this system, host country associations or regional organizations (ie EuroTour) would also charge out-of-country or out-of-continent players a fee, similar to the \$10 PDGA International Touring Player fee listed above that allows an international player to compete in all PDGA Tour events in North America.

At the same time, the PDGA is also beginning to increase its support of leading international events. The 2004 Japan Open is being sanctioned as a PDGA SuperTour (A Tier) and will receive financial and other support from the PDGA. A similar offer to the BDGA regarding the 2004 British Open was declined after valuable discussion. Based on the progress made in 2004 as presented in this proposal, the PDGA will be prepared to designate and sponsor the European Championships and other significant events as international PDGA A Tiers in 2005. One of the requirements of an international PDGA A Tier event is that all participants must hold current membership in either the PDGA, or a PDGA affiliated country association.

Over the longer term, the development of an international event system, as outlined, will increase our collective ability to promote disc golf, and to attract more players, more spectators, more sponsorship, and more media coverage.

## **7. PDGA World Championships**

With the PDGA based in North America, and the USA representing 85%+ of global disc golf, the PDGA World Championships have been held exclusively in North America since 1982, due to the sheer size of this event and the organizational efforts involved. This monopoly has become an issue, particularly for European leaders and players. However it also appears that, outside of Japan Sweden and the UK, no other country is capable of hosting an event on the scale of the current PDGA World Championships model. This year, the 2004 PDGA World Championships in Des Moines Iowa will combine the Professional Amateur and Junior divisions into one big show with over 900 participants. It is also likely that 2006-07-08 PDGA Pro and Amateur World Championships will be held at the National Disc Golf Centre in Augusta Georgia.

With this in mind, the 2005 PDGA Pro Worlds were offered to Sweden. However, it has been learned that Sweden will not be bidding on this event. A 2005 PDGA Pro Worlds in Europe or Japan, would provide us with a model for future international disc golf Major events, and could inspire other countries to run similar events in partnership with the PDGA.

Here is an example of increased international major event cooperation around the issue of player qualification. Using a basic Worlds model, a 2005 PDGA Pro Worlds in Europe that is played on 4 courses in 4 somes with 2 rounds per day has a capacity of 288 players. PDGA current membership would be required to participate. 144 or 50% of these positions would be reserved for North American players representing 85-90% of the Worlds top players. 120 positions would be assigned to Europe, based on the number of current memberships in each Euro country associations and on qualification at 2004 EuroTour events and at the 2005 European Championships, with extra weight given to Sweden and Scandinavia countries as host country/region. In this manner, Euro country associations would work collectively to determine their invited players. The remaining 24 places would be reserved for Japan, Taiwan, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, and other countries. After a certain date, any unfilled places would be awarded by the hosts and the PDGA to wait-listed players, including host country and regional players who did not formally qualify. In turn, were this event to occur in Japan, the JPDGA and other Asian/Pacific countries would be allotted more places, and Europe less.

Overall, the PDGA is prepared to give preference to any proposal for hosting the World Championships outside of North America. However, until there is immediate and real interest in hosting this event from Europe, Japan, or elsewhere through presentation of a formal proposal to the PDGA Board, the issue of internationalization of the PDGA Pro Worlds is not seen as a priority.

## **8. PDGA Europe**

The formation of a Europe-wide disc golf federation has also long been envisioned, most recently by Paul Francz (Switzerland), as part of his proposal for an International Disc Federation (IDF). However efforts aimed at uniting Europe have to date proven unsuccessful.

As part of this broader plan, the PDGA is prepared to assist in the formation of PDGA Europe™, to take place one or more years from now. This would be contingent on the prior establishment of a number of PDGA country association partnerships and on more than 200 European players being current PDGA members through affiliation. With the appropriate agreement in place, the PDGA would provide a portion of the start up costs of PDGA Europe™, which would be owned and directed by the PDGA affiliated European Associations with formal licensing agreements with the PDGA. The PDGA's role would be largely that of consultant and resource base.

Once established, the European affiliate membership fees would be assigned direct to PDGA Europe under a formal licensing agreement, with the PDGA retaining a percentage of these fees.

The potential for expanded PDGA financial support would be based on the ongoing achievements and development of PDGA Europe.

The potential benefits of a PDGA Europe™ include:

- increased coordination of the EuroTour, European Championships, associated player statistics and PDGA Major event qualification systems
- training in large event financial and operational management, including building EuroTour events into a source of income for PDGA Europe™
- PDGA marketing resources including local and regional sponsorship and media support materials
- coordination in video production, webcasting, and on-line event scoring with the PDGA
- PDGA Europe™ in turn acts as a resource for newer Euro-countries as they develop disc golf
- increased profile, stature and recognition through use of the PDGA name and logos

## 9. Summary and Conclusion

In summary the PDGA considers this concerted and coordinated approach to disc golf expansion as key to the future growth of our sport and its recognition on the world stage. The 2001 World Games in Akita Japan demonstrated that the international community can be energized through PDGA involvement, and the lack of international focus since that event has also shown that the PDGA needs to play a vital role internationally for this process to continue that momentum.

As the PDGA and the PDGA Tour continue to grow by 10-15% per year, the financial and related capacities of the PDGA to undertake more projects has increased. Examples of recent such projects include the pdga.com, pdgatour.com and pdgastore.com websites, the player and course ratings system, the 2003 National Tour, and increased investment in marketing and fundraising. In early 2004, the PDGA and the PDGA Tour will move to a new permanent home base at the National Disc Golf Center in Augusta Georgia. In short, there are many reasons to believe that disc golf and the PDGA are now becoming increasingly well-organized and are reaching the critical mass needed to attract media coverage, sponsorship, national and international attention.

As the PDGA prepares for the 2004 season, we believe that the opportunity to organize and grow disc golf internationally is now. As outlined in this proposal, the PDGA is prepared to invest the time and resources required to lead and foster increased international cooperation. Simply stated, the more we are able to unite our energies globally, the more we will be able to achieve in the name of disc golf.

Thanks very much for giving this proposal due consideration. We look forward to receiving your timely feedback including any alternative visions you may have, and to working more closely to develop disc golf around the world.

Sincerely yours,

Brian Hoeniger  
Executive Director

David "Nez" Nesbitt  
Competition Director

Theo Pozzy  
Commissioner