

Fall Summit Minutes
Professional Disc Golf Association (PDGA)
September 15, 2008
International Disc Golf Center – Appling, GA

Board Members:

Present: Todd Andrews, Chris Bellinger, Ron Convers, Bob Decker, Matt Gillis, Juliana Korver and Rick Rothstein

Quorum present? Yes

Others Present:

Executive Director: Brian Graham

Other: Dave Gentry – Tour Manager, Addie Isbell – Memberships Manager, Todd Breiner – Fulfillment, Dan “Stork” Roddick – Director Special Projects, Brian Hoeniger – Consultant for International Affairs, and Chuck Kennedy

Proceedings:

Meeting called to order at 8:30am by Chair, Bob Decker

Financial report: provided by ED, Brian Graham

- The financial position as of July 31st was presented. The PDGA is financially healthy with a safety net in place. This represents a significant increase compared to the net financial position at the same time last year; however a substantial amount of this increase is represented by the Pro/Am Worlds account due to the timing of wires to the host team.
- For July 2008, the PDGA income exceeded expenses

ED report: provided by Brian Graham

- Brian Graham has received an email response from John Jokinen with regard to the \$6500 that he and the Highbridge Hills Sports Complex owes the PDGA. Brian is hopeful that this communication will result in the PDGA recovering some of its losses.
- Issue 3 of the Flying Disc Magazine (FDM) has now been delivered and issue 4 is scheduled to be released at the end of this month. Issue 5 will have a compressed schedule with a planned late October release. Issue 6 will be released before the end of the year and FDM should be back on schedule. Brian is awaiting feedback from the BOD in regards to the critique of the first 3 issues.
- 2008 challenges with fulfillment: this year fulfillment has taken significantly longer than before. Recently a new post office has opened up near the fulfillment house in Alpharetta, GA which has helped with this problem.
- Because Dave Gentry has been focusing more on IT with the work being done on the new website, Karolyn has taken on more tour management tasks.
- Bob mentioned that there are rumors that the IRS will look at not for profits to see if they have unrelated business income. They are looking at specific targeted type items. This is something we need to watch for and Brian is aware of these items.

Membership update: provided by Memberships Manager, Addie Isbell

- Current membership is 12,237: 8.4% growth over last year with 15% international growth and 1% US growth. We have 791 lost and found members (not current in 07).
- looking for ideas for Ace club gifts
- Wyndham Hotel Groups is now giving PDGA members a 10% discount. PDGA receives 3% revenue share.
- Membership benefits such as the discount above will be printed on the back of 2009 membership cards.
- New items for future website: remembrance page, awards explanation, FAQ, testimonies from members who have had positive experiences with the businesses who are offering PDGA discounts.

Tour report: by Tour Manager, Dave Gentry

- As of 8/28 there were 923 events (778 US, 9 Canadian, and 136 International) on the calendar. Growth in July was flat, but the tour has accelerated over the past two months. Comparing the first 6 months of this year to 2007 shows the total number of events is up 6.1% and the total entrants are up 4.3%.
- A look at individual regions comparing the first seven months of 2007 to 2008 continues to show great growth in TX and OK (20.3% increase in attendance) and the Southern Nationals region has almost doubles (91.3%). There is a decrease in the Midwest (possibly due to the flooding earlier in the year).

National Tour Discussion:

- The board discussed the origins of the National Tour. The NT mission statement was presented and reads, "The National Tour mission is to showcase our top event and players to bring competitive disc golf into the sporting mainstream by strengthening corporate, media, community, and player/fan relations.
- Convers reported on the process and the work the NT committee put in over the year. He detailed the reasons behind the items included in the proposed NT agreement for 2008 that was rejected by the board at the September 3rd teleconference.
- Korver brought up a concern that the board needs to figure out a way to better utilize the committees so we don't isolate our volunteer base.
- Stork recommended a solution to this by creating an annual schedule or critical path for the committee. This would be a mutual agreement that involves a series of "sign offs" to keep the board informed and to keep the committee going in the right direction.
- Rothstein wondered if it is the players that bring in the spectators or if it is something else like a carnival atmosphere.
- Bellinger suggested that the PDGA should create a generic press release package to jump start marketing for each NT event.
- Conclusion: the board needs to spend more time discussing the direction for the NT. This will be an agenda item for the October meeting.

2009 NT event application review:

- Gentry passed out a spreadsheet comparison of the events that have applied for NT status for 2009.
- The board discussed the merits and shortcomings of all events and chose 8 to make up the NT for 2009

MOTION (Bellinger/Andrews)

Accept Vibram Open, Memorial, Beaver State Fling, Atlanta Open, Tulsa, Des Moines, Master's Cup, and either Kalamazoo or Minnesota Majestic (depending on upcoming conversations Gentry will have with both TDs) as the events that will make up the 2009 NT.

Passed unanimously.

- The board requested that Gentry discuss the reasons why each unaccepted event was turned down for NT status with the respective TDs.

TD Bill of Rights by Todd Andrews

- Andrews proposed a bill of rights for tournament directors and presented a potential first draft.
- Players need to have some responsibilities to the tournament such as conduct and attendance at the awards ceremony.
- there was a general agreement that the players need to be held responsible for such items, but a difference in opinions on how such things could or should be governed. Decker thought the proposed punishments (of probation) was too harsh. It was suggested that fines be used instead of probation. Rothstein expressed a dislike for potential fines. Giving the top 3 players a bonus for attending the award ceremonies was suggested.
- Convers suggested that this player's bill of rights should be included in the competition manual.

Marketing Report: by Brian Graham

- Graham is too busy to put the time needed into marketing. We need a plan for marketing and we need to figure out who we are marketing to.
- Graham is currently talking to a marketing firm in St. Louis.
- We need a marketing packet with professional materials including sponsorship packages.
- Hoeniger suggested that the PDGA get a subscription to SportsPro Magazine which talks about high end sponsorships.

PDGA Media Kit: by Matt Gillis

- Gillis works for Napco (North American Publishing Company) which is involved with business to business magazines. He suggests that we have a tour guide that goes to sponsors as well as a guide to spectators.
- Gillis passed out photocopies of such a magazine created by Napco.
- To better create such a document, we need to know what our product is, what do we offer our sponsors?
- Gillis is going to work on a mock up of a sponsor's magazine. Rothstein will be involved to give a second opinion. Graham will provide Gillis with content.
- The deadline for this is in the fall so we have it for this upcoming year.
- Isbell suggested that we have a year book (end of year publication).

Mission Statement Discussion: by Brian Graham

- Graham distributed copies of the survey responses received regarding the PDGA Mission statement.
- Bellinger is taking on this project and will continue to push it forward.

Governance: by Rick Rothstein

- There was a discussion regarding the many disc golf clubs and their legal and financial status. Are they a liability for the PDGA? Can we help them by making sure they are doing things legally?
- Should we have better regional representation on the board?
- Do we need a registry for every club?
- It would be good to collate information regarding the legal issues clubs face and disseminate it to all clubs as a reference.

International Committee Report: by Brian Hoeniger

- Hoeniger passed around documents from the international program including the guide to 2008 PDGA Europe, demographics, meeting minutes, International Program Protocol, and benefits of PDGA International Membership.
- In 2008 we have had 15 affiliated countries (a country that has at least 10 PDGA members and runs at least 1 PDGA event a year).
- There has been significant growth in the number of events.
- The primary challenge that the program faces is that each country does things a bit differently.
- We continue to get enquiries from new countries. They are sent a support package.
- Taiwan's membership has gone down.
- In the short term, South Korea looks to be our area of biggest growth.
- Europe is going strong. There is a European committee with a Yahoo group. They teleconference 2-3 times a year and meet in person once a year.
- Hoeniger discussed the highlights of many of the affiliated countries.
- Only about 10% of international members get the magazine. Due to the modest financial model of international disc golf, it was recommended that we should direct the countries to go directly to FDM for subscriptions.
- Countries are taking the initiative to translate the PDGA rules book into their respective languages.
- Successes: the growth in numbers in Europe. There is an increased interest in PDGA by European players. This includes European players traveling to the US as well as US players travelling to Europe. This is creating a global awareness for the brand that is the PDGA.

Competition Formats: by Rick Rothstein

- We should be looking for new formats to use in competition to help capture the growth we could see in pockets such as colleges and high schools. We need to provide information to these organizations and individual programs to encourage them to become affiliated with the PDGA.
- Stork still receives enquiries from the team golf article that he wrote years ago called "Back to the Future". We need to direct this energy and we need a welcome mat for collegiate and high school play.
- UPA has a national high school program that we can use as a guide.

Technical Standards Report: by Chuck Kennedy and Stork

- The committee is taking a look at the target specifications.
- Survey results have been compiled with regard to targets and can be accessed online. There was diversity in the responses. There is a strong undercurrent that we don't lock down the specs so tightly that we stifle innovation.

- Kennedy has the first draft of the proposed specification to be approved by the board that will go to the manufacturers. These are specs for 2010.
- Jeff Homburg has specs for all baskets when they were submitted for approval, however, there have been some modifications and the specs don't match the current basket dimensions.

Low Cost Membership: by Ron Convers

- There was a discussion regarding lower cost memberships to educators, our kid's role models.
- This discussion transitioned into Andrews PDGA Membership Proposal

PDGA Membership Proposal: by Todd Andrews and Chris Bellinger

- This idea was brought forth in an effort to increase PDGA membership, exposure for the sport and marketability of the PDGA mailing list.
- The idea is that anyone who plays in a sanctioned event will henceforth become a Limited Member by paying the same \$10.00 fee that they currently pay. They will continue with this status for all ensuing tournaments by continuing to pay the \$10 fee or until they pay to become a Full PDGA Member.
- Benefits to the player: they receive a PDGA number, thank you mailing including a PDGA rulebook and their ratings will be tracked in order to supply the member with the appropriate division they should compete in.
- The Limited Member will not receive: full PDGA rating information, new full PDGA Member swag, must continue to pay \$10 fee at every tournament, is not eligible to play in A-Tiers, NT's or Majors, PDGA voting rights, or PDGA online forum access.
- Implementation: TD's would be required to collect all pertinent contact information from the Limited Member. A registration page would be added to the TD report.
- Benefits to the PDGA: Directly boosts active membership numbers, makes mailing list more marketable, and makes all players accountable to PDGA disciplinary procedures.
- These Limited Members are individuals who are interested in the PDGA. We need to figure out how to hold onto them and maintain their contact information. This is a small investment for a potentially large impact.
- The board unanimously agreed that this was worth pursuing.

Fulfillment: by Todd Breiner

- Biggest challenge to fulfillment is that the fulfillment house does not have direct access to the database. Allowing access will decrease the work and drastically increase turnaround time by removing the built in lag between fulfillment and PDGA HQ.
- Details are being worked out for access long term but a short term solution is to provide fulfillment with a weekly update of membership data. This will allow fulfillment to assign PDGA numbers, generate membership cards, and mail information without interaction with PDGA staff.
- This will drastically reduce the number of complaints the PDGA fields and potential put membership packets in the hands of members within 8-10 days instead of 3-10 weeks.
- Minor modifications to the existing PDGA membership process will need to be made.

Action Items:

- Board members who have not already sent a critique of the FDM to Brian need to do so.
- If you have any ideas for Ace Club membership gifts, send them to Addie
- Stork will create a critical path agreement for the NT Committee
- Bob – include time for another discussion regarding the NT on the October Meeting agenda
- Gentry – talk to TD's who were not awarded NT status to explain why they were not included
- Gillis – create a media kit for sponsors with Rothstein's help
- Graham – provide content to Gillis for media kit
- Bellinger – continue working on the mission statement
- Decker – has started an outline for policies and procedures and will place this on the yahoo group for the board to further tweak.
- Bellinger - help with the policies and procedures documents that Decker will be putting on the Yahoo group.
- Rothstein – begin to collate information for and about clubs which will be distributed to all clubs to help them run legally.
- Rothstein is going to work on possible ways to help clubs.
- We need to make sure that we include the trail of changes that are made to any of our documents on the website so translators can see exactly what has changed in order to modify international documents.
- Rothstein will try to crystallize some actual ideas regarding a high school/colligate program.
- Gentry and Graham will come up with some preliminary ideas with regard to the technical requirements needed to implement the Limited Membership Proposal.
- Gentry will consult with Theo Pozzy regarding modifications to the PDGA membership process to facilitate improvement to the fulfillment process.
- Todd will create a list of computer recommendations for the PDGA office.

- Meeting adjourned at 5:01pm

- Minutes submitted by Secretary, Juliana Korver