

Teleconference Minutes
Professional Disc Golf Association (PDGA)
September 17, 2009

Board Members:

Present: Todd Andrews, Cris Bellinger, Dave Feldberg, Bob Decker, Matt Gillis (joined via Skype), Juliana Korver and Rick Rothstein

Quorum present? Yes

Others Present:

Executive Director: Brian Graham

Other: Todd Briner – fulfillment, Chuck Kennedy, Brian Hoeniger, Laurie Gibson, Dan “Stork” Roddick – Director Special Projects (joined via Skype), Shawn Sinclair – Competition Committee Chair, Addie Isbell – Memberships Manager.

Proceedings:

Meeting called to order at 8:41 am by Chair, Todd Andrews

Finance: by Graham

- As of the end of July 2009, the PDGA had a net financial position of \$547,509 compared to a net financial position of \$376,774 at the same time last year.
- 2009 income \$907,737 has exceeded expenses (\$583,346) thru July by \$324,391, compared to 2008 income (\$785,095) and 2009 expenses (\$607,371).
- The current finances of the PDGA remain very healthy.

Memberships:

- As of 9/16/09, we have a record 13,183 active members and member number 41,266 had been issued, compared to 12,237 members at the same time last year, representing a 7% increase.

Total: 13,183 - Pro: 3243 - Am: 9940

Committee Liaison assignments:

- Dave Feldberg will take over the NT committee and the Stats Committee.
- Rothstein will take the senior committee.
- Decker will take the youth committee.
- Feldberg will take over the International Committee.

The ratings committee will be rolled over into the statistics committee. Chuck will remain the chair of the committee.

Information Technology *by Andrews/Gentry*

- In 2010, the office may need new laptops.

- The top priority is to finish up the website in the last quarter. The next areas to be moved over to Drupal modules will be tournaments, stats and players.
- The online course directory has just been completed. It now includes a Google mash-up. It does not yet contain all of the courses, as it is still a work in progress and shows a representation of the courses we have in the US. This new course directory contains sections for course reviews, ratings and images.
- Gentry and the IT committee are looking for input on where the website should go in the future.
- A mobile version of the site is one of the 4th quarter list of priorities.
- Andrews has talked to a consultant regarding an online application or stand alone application that would help a TD from start to finish on running an event (from registration, to printing out the cards, to payouts, to filling out the TD report and more). Andrews is still waiting for a bid.
- Gentry, Bellinger, Andrews will spend Saturday updating the office network and software.
- The officials test is now online.
- There are ways in which we can simplify the TD report. There are sections that are not utilized and would not need to be included such as comments, press releases, and course records. We should only request the information that is essential. Or we should at least make it obvious what is mandatory and what is extra.
- Graham, Chuck and Dave will be talking about this on Sunday. Want to create a 1040 EZ version of the TD report.

Membership Initiatives *by Isbell*

Since that has started, we have had 13 people who have upgraded their memberships to a full member.

- Refer-a-Friend Membership Drive:

- Isbell suggested trying to create a *chain reaction* for 2010 with the membership drive. She is proposing that for every new member a recruiter gets to join the PDGA, the recruiter receives a \$5 credit to use towards merchandise in the PDGA online pro shop. There could even be a contest for the most new members recruited.
- The BOD encouraged Isbell to continue working on the details of this promotion.

- Magazine Revenue Program:

- Isbell suggested offering magazine renewals to the PDGA members as both a bonus for membership and as a way to raise money for the PDGA. This would be a secure online magazine store where members and their friends/family across the US/Canada could purchase or renew all their magazine subscriptions. They would save up to 85% off newsstand prices while the PDGA keeps 40% of all purchase amounts. The PDGA would receive fundraiser profit checks by mail each month.
- The BOD was reluctant to initialize such a program.
- Addie will look into this further to determine how much we may make from such a program.
- Isbell is looking for renewal gift ideas for Ace & Eagle gift options for 2010

- The PDGA Facebook page is being updated weekly

Ideas for future:

- G.E.M. (Global Expansion Member) - \$25 membership designed for parks and businesses to show support and help promote the sport around the world
- This is a non-competing membership that is not for individuals;
- business/park could be listed on "G.E.M" page – if they pay sponsor additional fee they can have their listed name linked to their business/park/website.
- Such members could receive an info pack, magazine, promo DVD and PDGA sticker.

- Isbell suggested a possible flat membership rate for both pros and ams alike.

Disciplinary Policy *by Andrews/Sinclair*

- Update: Zack Walker was given 6 months to write an apology that would be posted on the message board. We have yet to receive his apology and his time is up October 14, 2009. If he does not write an apology then the penalty will revert back to the original punishment of 1 year suspension and 1 year probation.
- Rothstein has rewritten the Disciplinary Policy document. Most changes are grammatical.
- The revised document was discussed in depth and revised further.
- We need to keep in mind that it is a big job to serve on the Disciplinary Committee and that the burnout rate is high.
- Thus we need to create a document that we can realistically back.
- We need to make sure that all PDGA members are aware of the fact that we have the right to discipline them based on actions.
- Andrews will make the edits to the Disciplinary Policy and get it back to the board for final approval. It will then be sent to our lawyer for his approval.

Code of Conduct *by Andrews/Bellinger*

- Andrews suggests that the code of Conduct be included in the Competition Manual.
- The problem of where we draw the line on jurisdiction was discussed.
- Stork and Rothstein are going to work on a statement.
- Should ams be treated differently than pros with regard to our code of conduct? Should the pros be held to a higher standard?
- We need something in the code of conduct that covers actions off the course.
- It is quite likely that the rules and competition manual will be printed together, so we have the opportunity to rewrite the alcohol policy.
- Currently C tiers do not require a mandatory disqualification for drinking during a round. Possibly we warn people/TD's that we are leaning towards making this the same across all tiers.
- It was recommended that we don't make changes to the competition or rules right now, but that we let the competition committee review and possibly revise the policy regarding alcohol and that we make it even across the board.

International Report

Asia

- Our efforts in Asia are not really paying off with regard to tournaments and members.
- We held our first face to face meeting with some Asian countries including South Korea and New Zealand at the Kansas City Worlds. From the meetings we came up with some priorities.
- We need to get the rule book translations finished for Japanese and Korean. The PDGA will facilitate, but it is up to the country itself to get the translation complete. Nesbitt will get the translated rules to look the same as all the other rules books.
- The manufacturers are willing to give some discounts regarding shipping overseas such as Australia.
- 2009 Australian open will be a cover story on PDGA site after USDGC
- Most of Japan works on may-April year. So they are requesting that we change the PDGA membership year to run from May – April.

MOTION (Feldberg/Decker)

Move to change the Japanese calendar year from the current calendar year (Jan-Dec) to run from May to April.

Motion passes unanimously.

Canada Update

- The one challenge in the management of the Canadian PDGA is that it has closed it's "PDGA" bank account and now all checks need to be made out to Hoeniger which is not professional.

MOTION (Decker/Bellinger)

Move that Brian Hoeniger be authorized to open a checking account in the name of Professional Disc Golf Association (PDGA) with HSBC Bank in Toronto Canada . Signatories on this account will be the International Director Brian Hoeniger, the Executive Director Brian Graham, and the Treasurer Robert Decker. One signatory will be required on all transactions.

Motion passes unanimously.

Europe

- 6 months ago the board asked for a proposal regarding the split of PDGA Europe from the PDGA.
- A significant amount of time was spent drafting a document specifying this split.
- The document conveyed that we believe it is in the best long-term interests of disc golf worldwide that the PDGA maintain ownership of PDGA Europe, and that the PDGA be listed as owner and registering party in regard to the formal registration of PDGA Europe in Switzerland or another country as appropriate.
- The vision is that PDGA Europe will be given increasing self-direction, resources, and responsibilities while remaining a wholly-owned division of PDGA. This also gives the PDGA the ability to provide necessary support and direction if the entity fails to meet the agreed-upon managerial and financial goals.
- During the European Championships, Hoeniger and Graham conducted a meeting with the European representatives.
- The subcommittee was mostly in agreement with what the PDGA was proposing, however, the current EuroTour Manger, Paul Francz was not.

- Certain things need to be in place before the handover takes place. Building the schedule, making sure sanctioning fees are collected, updating the database. Hoeniger could have suggested that we begin the handover if things were moving in the direction we anticipated, but sees this as a red flag and that now we should not allow the transition to begin until these things are in place.
- Potential model that we could follow: PDGA International as the global organization. Under that we have a PDGA USA, PDGA Europe, and eventually PDGA Canada, PDGA Asia...
- This would diminish the perception that PDGA is a US organization.
- Paul promised to go back to the drawing board and come up with another solution.
- Feldberg suggested creating a PDGA Global that could consist of an international board.
- Another way to look at this is to actually transition PDGA into PDGA Global and then create a PDGA USA underneath us. But then we need to make sure that there is European representation on PDGA Global.
- Roddick offered the following advice: This is a complex and dynamic issue. There probably won't be any single solutions that will work over a long time frame. Our success plants the seeds of the problems. We need to keep in mind what our overriding goals are and that can best be summed up in that we want disc golf to be a global game. How this happens will inevitably change over time. In a sense we are a colonizer now and when colonies succeed, they want independence. There are many things that our contingency hopes for such as being part of the Olympics which depends on our sport being recognized globally. Ultimately, this is a political game of keeping all the countries satisfied and perhaps the best way to do this is to see that they are proportionally represented based on their membership. It is important at least symbolically to allow European representation.
- It was requested that the International committee put together a proposal for the board.

Competition Related Topics by *Bellinger/Gentry/Feldberg*

- Pros playing Ams. The competition committee looked at the statistics and are now recommending that the policy stays in place for at least 2 more years. Perhaps most notable in the numbers is the fact that 28.6% of pro women competed in an Am division in 2008.
- General agreement is that the women and grandmaster men should be allowed to stay the same or continue to take advantage of this policy, but the board still had mixed feelings regarding Pro men playing down in an am division and discussed the possibility of not allowing them to do so in A tier events.

- We are noticing a string of people dropping out of tournaments (DNF's) and believe it is being caused by players not wanting a bad round to bring down their player rating. So instead of finishing a poor round, they quit playing.
- We still have a problem with rule enforcement. How can we get the players to enforce the rules?
- There has been more discussion regarding the 10 meter circle and the jump putt. Some want to get rid of this rule citing the fact that circles aren't always marked and that it is hard to tell if a person releases the disc before they are off the ground.
- Poor course quality was brought up as something that should be a determining factor when deciding the level of sanctioning for an event..
- Right now courtesy warnings expire at the end of a round. It was suggested that we create a tournament warning or a tour warning that would stay with a player longer. This, however, becomes an accounting problem as we need a way for future TD's to keep up with all such warnings.

- The idea of being able to move something that extends in front of your lie was brought up as the number 1 thing players want changed in the rules. That is, they want the ability to move debris before they throw. They feel it is a safety issue. It was suggested that if any part of the object is in your lie as long as part of the connected part is within your lie, then the player should be allowed to move the object.
- Suggestion that at the NT Clinics dedicate 5-10 minutes on rules and violations.
- A subcommittee of the Rules Committee and the Competition Committee is proposing the following changes with regard to the Rules Book and the Competition Manual:
 1. Print both manuals under a single cover for the 2010 season
 2. Make the following adjustments to these documents as listed below.

804.01 Special Conditions

Rules of Play: Leave "as is".

Competition Manual: N/A

804.02 Beginning Play

Rules of Play: Please refer to section 1.5B of the Competition Manual.

Competition Manual: Move complete text from Rules of Play to 1.5B

804.03 Scoring

Rules of Play: Leave "as is".

Competition Manual: N/A

804.04 Rain or Hazardous Conditions

Rules of Play: Please refer to section 1.7 of the Competition Manual.

Competition Manual: No changes required

804.05 Disqualification and Suspension

Rules of Play: Please refer to section 3.3 of the Competition Manual.

Competition Manual:

1. Add loud cursing which was previously missing.
2. Add reference to disciplinary procedure/policies at PDGA.com
3. Ask BoD to review Code of Conduct at Fall Summit.

804.06 Grouping and Sectioning

Rules of Play: Please refer to section 1.6 of the Competition Manual.

Competition Manual: No changes required

Motion (Decker/Korver)

Make the proposed changes to the rules and competition manual for the 2010 season.

Approved: Bellinger, Decker, Rothstein, Feldberg, Korver, Andrews

Abstain: Gillis

- There are Q and A's online that cover rules questions that come up in between rules revisions. Are the Q&A's official or not?
- The rules books are printed every year, so Q&A could be added to the rules at the end of each year.
- Recommended that the rules committee talk about the Q&A and recommend whether they are examples or law.

National Tour by *Duesler/Gentry*

- John Duesler made a presentation on the 2010 National Tour, calling it "A Bridge to Disc Golf's Future"
- When we were considering the NT, we were a little bit reflective. Our strategy was to review the 09 NT. The board has approved the 2011 planning time line, but there isn't enough time use it for 2010. So Duesler believes we need to take a low-risk approach for 2010. We need to choose events that are proven. We are inviting events to be 2010 NT events. We will possibly reduce the number of events for 2010.
- List of events that meet our criteria: Memorial (AZ), Mike Barnett's Event (FL), Charlotte (NC), Masters Cup (CA), Beaver State Fling (OR), Minnesota majestic (MN), Kansas City (MO), Brent Hambrick Memorial Open (OH), Vibram, Dan Doyel (NY).
- This is where it gets tricky: 2010 Japan Open is in the heart of NT season
- Pro & Am Worlds are at separate Venues which takes up twice as much time.
- How do we apply lessons from 09 NT?
- The board discussed the number of events that should be considered for NT's in 2010.
- There is also the issue of how much PDGA Supports each event and what form that support takes: (Reps, Scoring, Registration).
- The PDGA will be working to create live internet TV of 2010 National Tour.

What resources can PDGA Dedicate to NT?

- Typically NT Budget b/n \$40-\$50,000 a year.
- PDGA is considering the marshals program vs. PDGA Reps
- Live scoring, registration, promotion

Questions to be considered:

- Does PDGA support Increased NT Marketing?
- Is Less Better? (i.e. 6 events w/ same budget)?
- How much can PDGA fund ip television.

The committee recommends the following 4 things:

1. That the PDGA consider having a smaller NT in 2010 to increase the probability of success
2. That the PDGA consider funding an increased NT promotional effort (commercial & ip tv)
3. That the PDGA make these decisions in a timely manner
4. Once the above are approved, the board gives the committee a go-ahead to make formal invites to the designated NT events.

- A 3-day event may cost as much as \$40,000 to produce. We are looking for sponsors to underwrite this program.

- Concerns were brought up with regard to standardizations. We need to make sure we have everything in place before we start running. Pamphlets for TD's, pamphlets for players, uniformity first, which includes payout standards.
- The board discussed the costs vs benefit of putting the NT tour on ip tv.
- Discussion will be continued this evening over dinner.

MOTION (Decker/Korver)

To adjourn.

Passed unanimously

- Meeting adjourned at 4:57pm
- Minutes submitted by Secretary, Juliana Korver

Action Items

Graham: contact Brian Murphy to see if we should send Zack another letter reminding him of his need to send an apology within the next month.

BOD: look at the links for the player's code of conduct and continue discussions online.

BOD: Revisit the issue of Ams playing Pro in a future teleconference.