

PDGA World Player Ranking System

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OVERVIEW

PDGA Player Ratings do a fine job indicating how well players have been playing relative to the courses they've played in PDGA events. And this ratings system works all over the world. However, eventually the better players must actually play each other for the ratings to get formal validation. Until that happens, it's hard to know for sure who the best players in the world are strictly by their ratings.

The PDGA World Ranking System blends a modified calculation of the PDGA Player Ratings with finish positions in a few major events plus NT/ET events to rank the top players in the world every few months. Men from North America whose rating is over 999 using a straight average and based on at least 12 rounds in B-tier and higher events in the past 12 months get included in the rankings. Non-North American men with ratings over 999 based on at least 8 rounds in all tiers get included. The top ranked man in each PDGA affiliated country is also included in the yearend rankings regardless if their rating is over 999. The same process is used for women but their rating threshold is over 899 instead of 999. Players must be current PDGA members to be included.

The major events regularly counted in the ranking formula have become the most recent Memorial, USDGC, Players Cup, Women's Nationals and the Open divisions at Pro Worlds. The Japan Open, European Open and/or Scandinavian Open will also be included in the years they are offered as major championships. New in 2010, a new factor that uses a player's four best NT or ET events will replace the Memorial results in the rankings process. Master and older players who meet the minimum rating criteria are included. However, they only get credit when entering the Open Pro division at any event included in the rankings.

PROCESS

Once the groups of men and women have been selected according to the procedure above, the following calculations are done. The basic process first determines ranking points for each element being included and then multiplies that number by a weighting percentage. Lower points are better for each element. In addition, penalty points may be added for not attending enough other events whose weighting points at least equal the weighted points total of the two events with the largest fields – USDGC and Worlds for men – USWDGC and Worlds for women. Since everyone in this selection group has a rating, they will still get ranked even if they don't attend even one championship, but their penalty points will drop them farther down in the rankings than where just their rating would place them.

Ratings Points: The modified World Ranking Player Rating (WRPR) used for this calculation is based on a straight average of round ratings during the most recent 12 months prior to the date of the most recent player ratings update. Note that this could easily be different from a player's regular PDGA Player rating, especially for players who are less active, because the 12 months used for the WRPR is the same period for everyone, unlike the regular PDGA ratings where the 12 months used are based on each player's most recent 12-month period. And, the most recent 25% of round ratings are not double weighted for the WRPR.

The women are ranked by their WRPR from top to bottom with tied players each getting the same rank. The number of Ratings Points each receives is the same as their rank, with the top rated woman getting 1 point, second place 2 points, etc.

The WRPR Rank for men is based on how many rating points their WRPR is below the top rated player multiplied by 0.5. The player with the highest WRPR receives a rank of 1. Let's say that rating is 1040. A player with a WRPR of 1020 would receive a WRPR rank of 11 (i.e. $1 + 0.5 \times [1040 - 1020]$) regardless how many players have a WRPR above them. From a practical standpoint, each rating point difference between players is worth less than 0.1 throw. When a player wins an event, it has to at least be by one full throw. Using the 0.5 multiplier in this WRPR process tightens up the spacing between players to reflect the reality that a player with a rating only one point lower than another will lose to the higher rated player by roughly one half throw every 4-6 rounds.

USDGC Points: The finish position of every man being ranked is entered in a table. Then their adjusted finish position is determined based only on how they finished relative to each other. For example, let's say the 5th place USDGC finisher isn't in this group of players being ranked because either his rating isn't over 999 or it's not based on enough rounds. The player who finished 6th will now move up to 5th place for ranking points and everyone after him will also move up a position. The number of USDGC points will equal whatever a player's adjusted ranking position turns out to be. In other words, if a man has 19 players in this group who finished ahead of him at the USDGC, he would get 20 USDGC points. Players who are tied get the same number of points.

Women Nationals Points: Same process as USDGC but for women.

Japan Open, European Open/Scandinavian Open: Same process as above for men and women.

Pro Worlds Points: Same process as above but only finish positions in the Mens and Womens Open divisions count. Even though Master and Grandmaster aged men and women are on these lists, if they want to earn points toward world rankings, they must enter the open divisions.

NT & ET Points: Starting in 2010, the average of a man's best four finishes (women – best three) in either NTs (National Tour) or ETs (Eurotour) in the past 12 months will be a factor worth 20% of their World Ranking Points. Because the strength of fields in the NT versus ET can vary more than 35 rating points, a bonus has been added that can reduce a player's ranking (lower is better) in an event up to 0.25. For men, the average rating of the top 15 finishers is subtracted from 1000 and divided by 100. So, an event where the top 15 finishers average 1020, each player in that event would get an added deduction from their finish position equal to 0.20 ($[1020-1000]/100$) as a bonus. If the average of the top 15 is less than 1000, no bonus is calculated. For women, the average rating of the top 4 finishers is calculated, subtracted from 930, then divided by 100.

Weighting Factors: A player's World Ranking Player Rating (WRPR) Points will be weighted from 30% to 100% depending on how many major events each played. The more major events a player completes, the less weight their WRPR Points receive. If a player completes no major events nor participates in at least four events in the NT/ET series, their WRPR Points will get 100% weight, but the player will also receive the maximum in penalty points (see below). The weighting percentages for each major event will fluctuate depending on the player turnout each year. The major events for men and separately for women with the largest field sizes will be capped at a max of 20% weight with others receiving less weight proportionately based on field size.

Time Period Weighting: The weighting for each major event will slightly decrease in each update during the year each event is counted in the rankings by using the following weighting factors. Event played in past 3 months = 1.09, past 4-6 months = 1.03, past 7-9 months = 0.97 and past 10-12 months = 0.91.

For the Japan Open only which occurs every two years, we continue to reduce the weighting factor by another 0.06 each quarter older the results into the second year until the new Japan Open results start the two- year process again. These time period weights will be multiplied by the weighting calculated above for each event.

Penalty Points: The maximum Penalty Points will be determined separately for men and women based on the top two attended major championships by world ranked players during the past 12 months. The amount of Penalty Points is adjusted so a man near the top of the rankings who doesn't complete any major championships will end up around 10 places lower than they would based strictly on their WRPR Points rank. The penalty doesn't drop women as far, maybe around 5 places.

The amount of ranking drop is entirely contingent on what events the other players near them in the rankings played. Near the bottom of the list, it's possible the penalties might not drop a player's ranking at all if others around them also had similar penalties. For men in 2007, Penalty Points for missing the USDGC was 7 and Worlds was 4 for a maximum penalty of 11 if a player missed both.

Up to 4 Penalty Points could be reduced by playing in the Players Cup (3) and European Open (1) instead. For women in 2007, Penalty Points for Worlds was 6 and Women Nationals was 5 for a maximum penalty of 10. The penalty could be reduced by up to 3 points by playing in the Players Cup (2) and European Open (1) instead.

Final Ranking: The weights are multiplied by the points earned for each item and penalty points are added (if any) to that total. The total points for each player are ranked from low to high to determine their World Ranking. Tied players receive the same ranking but their order on the list is based on who had the better previous rank if they had one.