

Board of Directors Spring Summit Minutes Professional Disc Golf Association (PDGA)

May 14, 2010

Board Members:

Present: Todd Andrews, Cris Bellinger, Matt Gillis, Dave Feldberg, Bob Decker, Juliana Korver and Rick Rothstein

Quorum present? Yes

Others Present:

Executive Director: Brian Graham

Other: Dan “Stork” Roddick(via teleconference), Dave Gentry, Addie Isbell, Karolyn O’Kull, Chuck Kennedy, Cliff Towne, Conrad Damon (via teleconference), and Jeff Homburg (via teleconference).

Proceedings:

Meeting called to order at 8:36 am EST by Chair, Todd Andrews

International Committee *by Graham*

Memberships and Events

Cumulative growth of 10-15% is expected by year end in the International countries. Europe continues to be the primary area for growth, including newly PDGA affiliated countries Italy and Lithuania, and significant increases in PDGA members in key countries such as France Germany and Norway. The new Baltic Tour (based in Lithuania) and Central European Tour (based in Austria) are also bringing Hungary, Estonia and Latvia into the mix. At the top end the EuroTour, the continent’s equivalent to the USA NT, has expanded from 8 events in 2009 to 11 events in 2010. The Scandinavian Open in Skelleftea, Sweden (home of Latitude 64 discs and Jesper Lundmark), is this year’s EuroMajor, while the biennial European DGCs, to be held in late August near Dijon France and open to European players only, is likely to draw the largest and strongest Euro field of the year.

The Asia/Oceania region has, with the exception of South Korea, experienced little growth over the past several years. A key reason for this is the distances both between the countries and from the USA, as well as the distances between dg facilities within Australia. Late last year we addressed a key request of the JPDGA, that of changing their PDGA membership year to May-April, but this has not resulted in Japan member growth in 2010. The biennial Japan Open Major event will once again highlight Asia and global competition this year.

In Canada, our efforts through “PDGA Canada” to grow the PDGA’s reputation “north of the border”, notably by reinvesting Canada event sanctioning and player fees back into Canada, are slowly bearing fruit. Nowhere is this more apparent than in Quebec where we have facilitated matching Innova baskets for the first courses in Montreal and Sherbrooke/Eastern Townships, matching Innova baskets were also recently approved for Thunder Bay, Ontario, on the shores of Lake Superior. BC is the other province where our reputation is rising quickly. Our provincial rep for Alberta advises that the challenge there is

that TDs are hesitant to abide by PDGA rules, notably 804.05 ... Saskatchewan may soon host its 1st PDGA event ever, while in Ontario TDs and players are certainly becoming appreciative of our efforts at support, but this is currently being hindered by key issue #3 as discussed below.

PDGA Canada Finances

Funds at year end 2009 per report to HQ = CAD \$5,798

Add Income from events 2010 to date = CAD \$1,234

Deduct Sponsorships (3 + part of a 4th) distributed year to date = CAD \$1,618

Deduct GST (Good & Services Tax) for 08 and 09 paid to RevCan in 2010 = CAD \$560

Deduct other expenses YTD (bank, paypal, postage) = CAD \$178

= PDGA Canada funds balance as of 5/11/10 = CAD \$4,675

= USD \$4,558 @ CAD 1.00 = USD 0.975 (current rate of exchange)

Key Issue 1: PDGA Europe Transition

The anticipated transition of PDGA Europe, in which PDGA Europe would have been registered in Switzerland as a formally independent but very closely affiliated and dependent partner of PDGA, and in which many of European member and event fees as well as responsibilities held by the International Director would have been transferred to Europe, has been postponed indefinitely. The main reason for this was the determination first by Norway in mid March, and shortly thereafter by both Sweden and Finland (these 2 largest PDGA Europe countries represented 42% of Euro events and 51% of Euro members in 2009), that they preferred to maintain the status quo rather than the proposed transition as had been presented to the countries by Paul Francz, EuroTour Manager.

Their decisions closely followed the sending to the countries of a 6 page document written collectively by BDH, Nez, Stork and BG (attached). In this document we expressed certain concerns about the transition process to date and outlined how it should best proceed in the interests of all, including a request for the countries to complete the form provided as clear indication of their preference in regards to the transition.

Here, for your information, are the reasons stated by Sweden, which closely reflect those given by Norway, and to which Finland simply said "we agree with Sweden and Norway."

"Norway's timing is very close to Sweden's. We've had an intense discussion in the matter of the PDGA transition in Sweden as well the last week and share the Norwegian view to say "no" at this point. Here are the main points which have been lifted out:

- 1) Switzerland /which is the only real option for a PDGA Europe HQ is as "far" from Scandinavia as US, so there is no local benefits.
- 2) "If it ain't broken, don't fix it" and from our point of view PDGA today works well.
- 3) The cost per PDGA player today is very low and we receive all we need from PDGA. The PDGA Transition documents have not listed something PDGA Europe will provide that we lack today.
- 4) Somewhere along the line there is a big risk for coordination problems between PDGA and PDGA Europe — there can **never** be a benefit of having one more actor in the chain.
- 5) Can't see the purpose or advantage in alienating us from the biggest discgolf organization in the world.

- 6) No sport has ever gained from having more organizations, we should strive for as few organizations as possible.
- 7) The transition will cost time and money and we will risk a lot during the process.
- 8) No obvious economical gain will be made — money that today end up at PDGA will instead end up in PDGA Europe. Instead there is a risk for higher costs since Europe now alone has to pay all their expenses: salaries and expenses must be paid even if the incomes decrease.
- 9) A European organization is only needed for the European Championship and the EuroTour, but this isn't enough to justify an entire organization when we already have the existing PDGA (with representatives on all major events) and our existing board in PDGA-Europe.
- 10) There is an obvious danger in laying so much handling on one person (the only real alternative: Paul). If something happens to Paul we face a risk of being stranded, while the existing PDGA doesn't stand or fall based on one specific person.”

The comments from Scandinavia stopped the transition in its tracks, which should come as good news to both HQ and the Board, both of whom had indicated serious apprehensions in regards to the transition to me. Subsequently, Paul Franz wrote requesting that I/we consider keeping PDGA Europe as is BUT transfer to Europe/himself the responsibilities for managing the Euro events and members and the collection of the associated fees. To this I responded: “My thinking at this point is somewhat the opposite of yours ... Briefly I think we should still consider the formalization of PDGA Europe as a European entity (upgrade from steering committee) but without starting any handover of current tasks (events, memberships). Perhaps HQ could send some of the event sanctioning revenue (50%) back to Europe/yourself and Sinus and this in turn would enable you respectively to upgrade all the Euro DGCs work and systems and pdga-europe.com website ...”

Since then we have only received the signed preference forms from 2 of the 14 current affiliated European countries which reflects 1) The end of the proposed transition as noted above, but also 2) the lack of time for and interest in these issues by some of the countries, given their PDGA reps are volunteers and given their priorities are the submission of memberships and events info and the processing/delivery of the same, including the invaluable player ratings by HQ.

So that is where things stand at the moment. In the past 2 years, when there were fewer EuroTour events, the PDGA topped up the Europe/EuroTour funds from the International program budget by about \$1000. With more ET events this year the ET bonus payouts and admin should be self-funding so I am proposing that instead we provide this \$1000 again towards year-end as additional stipend to Paul and Sinus (www.pdga-europe.com manager) to help with the work in regards to the website and the development of standards/guidelines for the European DG Championships.

Key Issue 2: World Championships Growth/Sponsorship

From the recent Board minutes it is apparent that the PDGA is in its best fiscal health ever. To wit: “At the end of 2009 the PDGA had a net financial position of \$389,733, compared to ... \$227,914 a year ago, representing an increase of \$161,819.” Some of the reasons for this are: the initial investment in IDGC is now largely complete, growth of memberships and events, the \$10 non member/player fee is a cash cow. While the staff are board are entrusted with managing these funds, ultimately they belong to all PDGA members.

It has now been 10 years since PAW 2000 delivered the still record pro worlds singles purse of \$92600. While I find Matt “The Kid” Hall’s discussion board comments largely distasteful and immature, I am with him on this issue: Invest more players fees back into the players. Specifically into the PRO WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS which has the PDGA’s name on it. It’s OUR biggest stage. Give the USDGC all the superlatives it deserves this is the PDGA and the sport’s WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS. If you start promoting the biggest purse - \$100K guaranteed - in dg history at this its #1 event (it’s the WORLDS!!!) then people are going to notice, more pros and more spectators will come and the PDGA will benefit not least in terms of its top pro players standing up and saying wow the PDGA really stepped up here and that is not only encouraging ... its COOL. I think it’s also not unreasonable to project that the financial resources accruing to PDGA will continue to grow, in short this is a risk that the PDGA can well afford to take today ...

For those of you who say, well, what about the Ams, I would argue you can do the same for the PDGA AMATEUR WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS. But given there may not be need or desire to increase the AM payout or perhaps even the player’s package, the +/- \$20K PDGA sponsorship to Am Worlds could offset a reduced entry fee. Reducing the entry fee by \$40 x 500 players = \$20K ...

It also seems apparent that HQ will soon need to hire another staff person to help deal with the floods of memberships and events, the endless inquiries associated therewith, not to mention all else that HQ does. I would argue that one of this or an existing staff or consultant’s responsibilities would be to work with the world’s hosts more closely in the year/months/weeks/days leading up to the events.

The bottom line is this. The Pro World’s in particular is stagnating, the existing model of “ensure the basics are delivered and hope its all good when the final putt goes in” and the level of PDGA sponsorship as event title holder/owner has remained largely unchanged for a decade or so. It’s time for the PDGA to take this, one of its biggest properties, to the next level. And while 2010 may be too soon, and 2011 PW may be uncertain, PAW 2012, hosted by the top notch Charlotte DGC, with whom PDGA has both excellent and proximate relations, offers the obvious and potentially ideal opportunity.

Tournament Director Training *by Rothstein*

Our building blocks are our local clubs. We should concentrate on how we can make them better in what they do. Could we create a mentoring system for the lowest level. Then we can build from there.

Graham suggested that we also have some kind of online exam. We want our tournaments better, but we need to be careful how hard we push. At what point do we push for better events instead of more events.

Could we create a hotline for TDs if they have questions. We need to empower our TDs and provide them the tools to do their job well. Kennedy is documenting the TD process in Houston where there is a large supporting group behind the TDs. This process could be generalized to help others with the process.

We should have regional opportunities for TDs to go through training.

Running a sanctioned PDGA event is not an easy task especially for someone who has never run or assisted with a previous event. We are also experiencing more complaints about a tournament director’s decisions and performance as our membership becomes savvier about requirements and expectations. Below are a variety of ideas that we should consider to make this process easier for the new TD.

1. Mentoring program
If a member calls the office and expresses an interest. They are always encouraged that they find a TD, volunteer, and learn as much as they can. We don't have an official mentoring program and can easily discuss the pros and cons of implementing such a system.
2. Feedback
Five years ago TDs were better at handing out the feedback form that is contained in the official report. The amount of submission that we receive has decreased every year and now it is usually because directors take their time to collect the completed forms and mail them to us. In the future we will be able to allow users to fill out their feedback electronically and allow a TD the ability to review this feedback.
3. Tournament Director Testing
A topic that has come up several times over the past several years is an exam not only for certified officials but for TDs as well. In the past we have always been worried about the administration required to implement such a system and the potential impact this would have on tournament revenue. However the NT proficiency exam has given us the tools to minimize the administration and having a US tour of approximately 1000 events gives us some flexibility revenue wise. We can implement this exam similar to NT proficiency test and require it only for TDs for Majors, NTs, and Super Tour events. Leaving it as an option for certified officials will probably generate a fair amount of interest and education.

Do we need a program similar to the marshals program that stipends an experienced TD to hit the big events to verify that things are being done well? Should we have a rules committee hotline?

MOTION (Feldberg/Decker)

Move that the PDGA office compile a tournament directors manual that would be available for use in 2011.

Motion passes unanimously.

Regional Representation *by Rothstein*

When we switched from the original constitution to the current more corporate structure, we lost the regional coordinators. We have our state coordinators, but it seems like their only interest is in who from their state will be granted the USDGC spot. There is no real communication there. We need to increase the communications. We used to have board members run for a specific position and it seemed that we got more done when that was the case. People feel that the PDGA is out there and that they are not a part of it.

Affiliate Club Program *by Towne*

Currently there are nearly 100 clubs in the affiliate club program. We've tried to assist the clubs in what they do. The PDGA offers all affiliate club members a \$5 discount for all individuals in the club to join the PDGA. There are some other advantages such as taking the officials exam for free. Decker is willing to work with Towne to coordinate information that can be made available to these clubs.

Maybe it is time for us to consider adding an additional staff position and then task that person with the job of working on this issue.

The daunting list of responsibilities that is given to state coordinators is intended to give them a list of things that they can do not to tell them that they should attempt to do all of the activities. Unless you give them continual opportunities to do things, they aren't going to pick it up. In the past, we have done relatively little to ask them to do things. We need to do a better job directing them in ways that they can be

helpful and productive. Stork believes that we would be surprised and delighted if we did provide more direction to these individuals.

Do we even need state coordinators. Should we rework the system?

Isbell suggested having levels in the affiliate club such as businesses, parks and rec, collegiate, and local clubs. Addie is going to work with Gillis to come up with a business model and will work with Towne to institute this.

The model intended was that a club would sell memberships for full price and then use the money to do something good for the club or community.

One of the things that would be useful for us is to make sure we are focusing on the more successful clubs. At times there have been articles on how clubs are doing things. Maybe we could have an ongoing critical series in the newsletter that would highlight clubs that are doing interesting things.

We can make a better effort at pulling in state coordinators when there is something going on in their region. We need to keep them in mind. We should also more frequently ask them for their opinions.

Towne wants help with his new database.

Clubs do course development, run events, and project good thoughts about the PDGA. We can also ask them to work on other things such as youth development.

Disciplinary Committee *by Sinclair via Andrews*

Sinclair sent a proposal regarding the deficiencies of the current Disciplinary process. He is proposing that the committee chair position become a paid consultant position.

Feldberg felt the amount of compensation was too high and suggested \$400/month. Decker suggested that \$500/month would be reasonable. Graham complemented Sinclair's abilities and is in favor of making this a paid position. Nesbitt also feels this is the toughest committee to serve on. But wonders if we are getting to a critical mass where we would be better off to hire another employer rather than keep siphoning out these tasks to volunteers. Graham agrees with this in general, but the DC committee was created to keep discipline out of the office. It was also a recommendation by our lawyer to keep the office staff out of this.

Decker emphasizes the importance of dealing with these issues in a timely manner and agrees that these cases should not be dealt with by the staff.

Bellinger suggested that Graham negotiate with Sinclair to come to an agreement. Feldberg suggested that we possibly pay Sinclair on a case by case basis. Feldberg wants to see how much work has been done over the last two years.

Andrews will talk to Sinclair to get something more concrete and will bring it back to the board.

Definition of Major *by Graham*

There have been a few inquiries from events to elevate their status to Major.

Our current definition of a major: Major Events include World and National Championships which are based on invitations and player qualification. Qualification to World Championships and Majors re award-

ded according to previous year Tour Points and other qualifying criteria. Current members who do not earn an invitation to the world championships may gain entry after the 60 day exclusive registration period to invited players has expired and there are open spots.

In ball golf, majors are defined by the press.

Kennedy thinks it is inappropriate to use the word major for our events. He would rather see the PDGA using the World Championship instead of Major.

There is a fear that if we continue to add majors that we will dilute the status level of a major.

We need to remember that we are a tour of women, men, masters, and ams. We have championship events that we currently call majors.

Gentry expressed a concern that the doubles events shouldn't be included in the major category.

Support of PDGA owned events *by Graham*

There have been a few issues in the past years. There have been very few bids for pro worlds over the last decade.

Currently we are basically telling the host that they have to go out and raise \$40,000 to run this event. Graham is asking that we take a bigger management role and that we rely on the local community to take care of the courses. We can use the same amount of money that we currently use for Marshals and instead bring in course directors. Graham is suggesting that we come up with the \$15,000 added money. The local club would still be encouraged to raise money to make the event better.

FINANCIAL

Income: \$3250

- 325 players x \$10 registration fee = \$3250 (300 players plus 25 refunds less reg. fee)

Expenses: \$8250 *

- Invites and registration by BEI - \$550
- Marshals - \$5000 (hotel, airfare, compensation)
- Scoring - \$1000
- Staff travel and accommodations - \$2100
- Site Review - \$600

Cost: (Expenses less Income) \$5000 + Stipend: \$6000 = Total Support: \$11,000

- * These numbers are approximate based upon past events and do not include PDGA staff salaries.

PDGA RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Determine player eligibility, and qualification
- Manage the invitation and registration of qualified players

- Provide the approved rules governing the competition and approve the final event specific ground rules as proposed by the HOST.
- Approve the playing courses as proposed by the HOST
- Provide a competition schedule guideline and approve the final competitive schedule as proposed by the HOST
- Provide at least two (2) PDGA representative(s) as core staff advisor(s)
- Provide and pay for PDGA Operations Marshals to support the Event.
- Assist the HOST in event staffing through the referral of PDGA tournament directors and officials from other regions
- Provide guidelines for statistical procedures and approve the statistical procedure as proposed by the HOST
- Provide on-site direction for all statistical procedures, including scoring as well as local and Internet posting of results.
- With HOST, coordinate national and international sponsorship development and management
- With HOST, coordinate national and international publicity through the establishment and maintenance of contact with local, national and international media before, during and after the tournament, including regular press releases with the assistance of the HOST
- Placement of the Event information on the PDGA web site or linkage to another site as agreed with HOST
- Provide a guideline to the HOST for award distribution in accordance with PDGA Tour standards and approve the final payout tables and trophies as proposed by the HOST
- Provide the insurance coverage in compliance with the PDGA Event policy Details of the current policy are available from PDGA headquarters
- Be added as a co-signer for local agreements as may be required
- Provide HOST with financial reference reports from previous similar PDGA events
- Provide HOST with a pre-event financial stipend of US\$60000, upon signing of this agreement.
- Provide HOST with prompt review and consideration for HOST responsibilities subject to PDGA approval

SUMMARY:

Graham feels that our current Pro Worlds model is broken and that is one of the reasons that very few people have been interested in hosting the Pro Worlds, as well as the Pro Worlds financial struggles in recent years. We have not had more than one bidder for the Pro Worlds in the past ten years and during this time, the PDGA has had to search for someone to “step up” several times (Augusta, Houston, Des Moines).

- Increase financial stipend to \$15,000 (or) 25% of entry fees to cover the minimum added money.
- PDGA take a more active role in the planning and management of the event
- PDGA take the lead in the management of the competition (course directors)
- PDGA create and implement a marketing/media plan (template) to follow to promote the event
- Host city/club be primarily responsible for course prep, local sponsorship, ancillary activities & players package

Nesbitt asked if it would be better to take over complete control instead of just taking over the competition part of this. Nesbitt doesn't believe this will solve the problem. Decker said if we go to this model, we need to show the local clubs where they make their financial reward.

Isbell suggested that we have a group go out to run it and we put bids out to cities instead of to clubs.

One of the fears that is being addressed is weather or not the local club will raise enough money. Another fear is that there are more pros that are movers and shakers than ams. So it is easier to assemble a strong group to run an am worlds than a pro. There are other places that may feel that they don't have appropriate courses to run a pro worlds.

Graham was instructed to develop a more detailed plan for taking more control in pro worlds.

Course Directory *by Towne*

There are currently 3134 courses listed with 700 reviewed. Towne thinks we should continue to create the physical book as well as provide the information online.

Cliff gave the board a tour of the current course directory. Cliff requests that each of the board members login to the course directory and review the courses they are familiar with.

Majors Bids *by Graham*

US Women's – There are 2 bids for the 2012 USWDGC: Huntsville, AL and Round Rock, TX.

The board directed Graham to talk to both Huntsville and Round Rock and determine who will run it in 2011 and who will run it in 2012.

US Masters – There are 2 bids for the 2011 masters: Louisville and Huntsville, TX.

Graham wants to go back to Greenwell and ask for more details on the Louisville bid.

The Shawshank course is a good course in the Houston area, but it is limited in that it is a private course in the middle of a rural area that will have a very difficult time accommodating parking. It was recommended that Graham go back to Neal (proposed Houston TD) and encourage that he choose another course.

2011 pro worlds from Santa Cruz, CA. Graham will be going to Santa Cruz next week for the Master's Cup. Graham will review the courses and the distances between them. He will talk to Tom Schot to get more specific details.

Gender Issue *by Graham*

Our lawyer suggested that we follow the Stockholm Consensus that in summary recommends the following:

Individuals undergoing sex reassignment from male to female after puberty (and the converse) be eligible for participation in female or male competition, respectively, under the following conditions:

- Surgical anatomical changes have been completed
- Legal recognition of their assigned sex has been conferred by the appropriate official authorities
- Hormonal therapy has been administered in a verifiable manner and for a sufficient length of time to minimize gender-related advantages in sport competitions. (For at least 2 years)

MOTION (Decker/Feldberg)

Move to accept the Stockholm consensus and direct our attorney to review our documents to verify that we are using the correct terms for sex and gender.

Feldberg abstain

all others yes

Motion passes.

Worlds DVD Bids *by Graham*

There are 5 bids for the PDGA Worlds DVD: Clash Productions, Front Porch Productions, Media Active, Potenza Productions and Rivers Edge Digital Media.

Are we willing to go with an unproven company? Korver suggested that we consider not having a worlds video and put the money into live internet broadcasting instead.

Graham was instructed to negotiate with River's Edge to see if they would be willing to include some PDGA talent for interviews and voice over work.

Strategic Planning *by Graham*

Graham is concerned that the board has been more reactive and may benefit from setting some more long term goals. The process has been started to create more independent pro, am and international groups that would direct their own growth and direction. This was more a reaction to the European players breaking off of the PDGA which is no longer going forward at this time.

The ams are our biggest contingency and our biggest market. We should start focusing more on the ams.

It has been mentioned at previous meetings that we can put out all our marketing based on Am under the name "Professional Disc Golf Association". We own the name PDGA we can use which ever acronym we want.

Briner said it isn't a money issue, it is a perception issue where new players don't know weather they are allowed to join the PDGA because they are not professionals.

Gillis directed an exercise in project management to help members brainstorm ideas.

Graham was directed to pursue a much larger online store presence for the PDGA store.

MOTION (Rothstein/Decker)

To adjourn.

Passed

Motion (Matt/Dekcer)

- Meeting adjourned at pm 4:48pm EST

- Minutes submitted by Secretary, Juliana Korver

Action Items

Graham: send the new tech standards enforcement procedure to our attorney for approval.

Bod Members: post reviews of courses we are familiar with.

Rothstein: work with Nesbitt on a the TD training manual.

Graham: speak with Rivers Edge Digital Media regarding bid and on air personalities.

Graham: speak with Innova about the EDGE program.

Office: review and edit documents to agree with the Stockholm Consensus.

Graham: develop details and budget pertaining to PDGA support of Pro Worlds.

Graham: speak with Tom Schot and review plan and courses during visit to Santa Cruz.

Graham: speak with Huntsville, AL and Round Rock, TX to determine preference for year to host US
Women's Championships

Graham: speak with Louisville, KY and Huntsville, TX to request additional information

Isbell: develop details for changing of membership carry over date

Graham, Gentry & Duesler: move forward with developing plan for management of 2011 NT

Gillis and Isbell: come up with a business model and then work with Towne to to institute this.

Next Teleconference Agenda Items

Discussion on potential rules changes

Definition of Majors – talk about this on email between now and then.