

# PDGA Fall Summit – October 16-17, 2017

## **Day 1**

The meeting was called to order at 9:01 by Justin Menickelli.

**Board Members Present:** Justin Menickelli, Dave West, Kevin McCoy, Shawn Sinclair, Nate Heinold, Dave Foss, Robert Decker, Elaine King

**Staff Present:** Joe Chargualaf, Andrew Sweeton, Mike Downes, Steve Ganz, Peter Crist, Matt Gregoire, Vic Allen, Toni Giusto, Zach Shafer, Tom Lynch, Amber Schoch

**Consultants Present:** Dan Roddick, Jeff Homburg, Brian Hoeniger

**Others Present:** Laura Gibson, Des Reading, Jay Reading, Derrick Robbins, John Bird, Chuck Kennedy, Roger Smith, Sarah Hokom, Terry Miller, Steve Dodge (day 2), Jeff Spring (day 2)

## **Welcome and Introductions – Justin Menickelli**

Welcome by Justin Menickelli. Motion to approve the minutes of the September teleconference. Approved. Introductions of Board members, staff, and guests.

**Graph of active members by gender (Menickelli)** – Still only 7% female. Lots of room for growth – we need to use this data to inform all of our decision making.

Discussion: Brian H. – In Europe the payouts for women will be the same as for the men. Elaine – need to target women with more independent “temperaments” in sports and competition. Shawn – how do we get the conversion of women playing recreationally versus in tournaments? Stork – need to define what it means to be a member of the PDGA for women. John Bird – how do DG statistics compare to other sports? Jay Reading – girls vs. women; EDGE is important; need to look at intermural college programs and connect with them

**ACTION** – Elaine King to work with the PDGA Women’s Committee to make a presentation at the 2018 Spring Summit about women’s disc golf participation.

## **Office and Staff Reports – Joe Chargualaf/Staff**

**Executive Director Report (Chargualaf):** Recognition of the PDGA staff. Good financial position. Hit 100,000<sup>th</sup> member, and 38,000 active members for the first time. First club in China; started new board for PDGA Europe; brought in Disc Golf Scene (Pete); hosted Pro Worlds and Hall of Fame at IDGC. New rule book/competition manual has been completed and should be here this week. (Handout) – Financials are good; spending on IT is important to keep up; record year for approval of new discs for technical standards.

**Membership (Allen)** – (handout) – just under 38,000 members; 15% increase; multi-year members have increased (64% increase); website/PayPal has made registration/renewals easier.

**ACTION** – auditor reports need to be sent to and approved by the Board Treasurer (and Bob Decker as well); recently haven’t received.

**Tour Report (Sweeton)** – (handout) - up by 421 events worldwide; 3,398 events as of 10/16; 6 years ago – 1,305 events; 2018 documentation is in progress (including new divisions); Kevin – happy to see the uptick in

leagues and the technology improvements; Elaine – guidelines for standards for tournaments, i.e., water on the course? Enforcement? Info from tournament feedback form; Zach – assign “grades” on feedback forms for tournaments and TDs. Stork – can we continue this kind of event growth? Andrew – yes, with new technology options internally; good problems to have; John Bird – standardize tournament directors – require clinics, standardized protocol, education? Jay – needs someone to be involved in providing more compliance and guidance to tournament directors. Elaine – recommended that instructional videos should be made for TDs, spotters and volunteers. Stork – give more responsibility to state coordinators. Bob Decker – find an outsourcing group to handle a lot of the clerical stuff? Will be discussed in future reports from technology and Joe.

#### **10:17 – BREAK**

**Scholastic Disc Golf (Heinold/Chargualaf)** – (handout) - Junior High and High School level. Lots of opportunity at the JH/HS level for disc golf to grow. Focus on areas with established clubs and courses in the area. Five- to ten-year process – getting in front of athletic directors. Proposal to hire a full-time person with educational background to organize disc golf in schools. Bob Decker – is this something that will work with the collegiate programs? Stork – talk to the ultimate folks about what they have done. Nate – looking more towards disc golf as an “official” high school sport – conferences, against other schools, championships, etc. Kevin – need to approach local and state sports conferences and associations. Vic – maybe look at it like Little League Baseball, not just through the schools. Joe – this is the most important thing we can do to grow the sport. Most manufacturers are on board as well; need a staff person to focus on this, and re-activate the education committee. Start with club programs in the schools and grow to “official” sport. Stork – PE and club must be first, before interscholastic. Jay – EDGE has a system for creating the clubs; need to see how to expand on what is already in place. Joe – EDGE may be viewed as an Innova program; it may be beneficial to create a PDGA-led program to encourage participation by all manufacturers independent of brand. Need a dedicated resource to get this off the ground. Zach – Starting as a club sports is a good thing; start with college, then HS, then Middle and Elementary. Joe – this discussion is to gauge Board interest – should we pursue this? Dave Foss – need to be prepared to offer disc golf at every level of education.

STRAW POLL – moving forward; hiring someone: Nate, Dave, Justin, Elaine, Shawn, Bob, Kevin, Dave W – all approve. Justin – need a cohesive in-house educational program supported by the PDGA. Jay – not just hiring a person, but an organization – it’s going to be big. Des – need to train the teachers and the rest will come; certified trainers through the PDGA. Joe – the PDGA may be in a financial position now to consider hiring someone to oversee this as a fulltime responsibility.

#### **11:20 – BREAK**

### **Technology Report (Ganz/Crist)** – (Presentation) – Progress Report and Future Plans

*Development Tracks - Disc Golf Scene / PDGA.com / PDGA Database (PDB) / Mobile Apps / PDGA Tournament Manager / PDGA Tournament Scoring / APIs and Data Sharing*

*Disc Golf Scene* – Positive feedback; 28% growth of tournaments using online registration; see presentation for specific numbers; PDGA leagues integrated into DGS – haven’t announced or launched yet, but 20 leagues already using.

*PDGA.com* – 3.4% increase in site usage; European transition ready to go but on hold for now; HTTPS for all pages for security; Future – online webinars about PDGA.com

*PDB* – used for results and ratings applications

*PDGA Tournament Manager* – collecting course and layout details; automated grouping has launched (creating tee times online); results certification and ratings processing workflows are in the pipeline; payout calculator under development. Nate – need to allow flexibility for TDs. Kevin – why don't we take the PDGA fee directly out of tournament registration fees upfront? Steve - Can be done. Also looking into ways of facilitating payout through Tournament Manager online. Elaine – will there be different payout schemes available? And course info – can we include course conditions? And course ratings? Pete – we can.

*PDGA Tournament Scoring* – lightweight, mobile web application for tournament staff and volunteers; hole-by-hole scoring.

*Mobile Apps* – PDGA Disc Golf 2 App for iPhone and Android launched in March; free.

*APIs and Data Sharing* – UDisc for uploading results and tee-times directly to PDGA.com; will enable links to other live scoring applications; live results API for Ultiworld.

*Moving Forward*

Remove requirement for TD Report; automate results and ratings processing; build online applications for certifying results, certifying round ratings, generate player ratings. Brian – will this enable ratings to be closer to real-time? Steve – automate the process first, then move forward. Will be separating league ratings from tournament ratings – will look at real-time for leagues first.

*Disc Golf Scene* – sync course directories; registration payments; alternate forms of payouts; mobile web experience.

Decisions – outsourcing versus hiring; Drupal 8 versus something completely different

*Discussion* – Brian – need to let members, etc. know about all of these technology developments. Terry – regular segments on Smashboxx? Kevin – kudos to Steve and Pete for all of their hard work. Sarah – data about how they are playing the game could be valuable – starting at the NT level. Elaine – Board members should consider posting videos for social media and PDGA.com. Zach – noticeable improvement over the last year – thanks. Zach – Suggestion: Hotlinks for sponsored players on their player profile (i.e., sponsors pay for their logo to be on their players' pages).

**Tournament Turn-Key (McCoy)** – (handout) - PDGA Turnkey Tournament System – for leagues; through Disc Golf Scene – automated online registration; distribution of payout through online system and online store; ways to reward the league tournament directors; players get to choose what they want from the online store for payout; aim to generate more tournaments, more players, more revenue; will benefit the PDGA – more uniform tournament system; players would need to be a PDGA member in order to claim their prizes; advertiser revenue on the online store site. Cost analysis available in the handout. Outsourcing would be possible for the fulfillment center.

*Discussion* – Nate – will be valuable to smaller tournaments and smaller clubs; how much would it cost to build this kind of platform? Steve – good concept, need to explore and do a full cost/benefit analysis. Kevin – have PDGA buy the merchandise to provide to the fulfillment center. Andrew – perk system for TDs approved by the Board before, but not doing until it can be automated. Single biggest problem is the current online store; we don't market the PDGA at all. Steve – great concept, but cannot comment on costs at this time. Need to shop around for fulfillment centers as well – need to get bids. Justin – we need to do something about

fulfillment and significant improvement of marketing of the PDGA brand. Zach – award bonus points to TDs rather than merchandise – would make the PDGA possibly look partial to some brands. Kevin – maybe trial period for rollout in steps. Andrew – start with “low-hanging” fruit – cash payouts via PayPal for pros. Dave F – credit wallets for clubs to accumulate credits to purchase larger club merchandise (banners, pop-up tents). Steve – the board should explore the concept, and then Steve could do a cost analysis. Bob – lot of unknowns; advantages and disadvantages. Joe – what are our priorities as an organization? NT? Marketing? TV/Live coverage? Pro Shop with online distribution? Where are we going as an organization? That discussion has to happen first. Nate – volunteering to work with Kevin on a future plan and details.

## **2:05 BREAK**

**Tournament Site Review Process (Sinclair)** – (presentation) - For World Championships and NT events. TDs have started requesting the PDGA’s help with courses for events. Goals: (1) Maintain the integrity of the competition. (2) Speed of play. (3) Safety and accessibility. (4) Course facility. (5) Location for field events.

*Discussion* - Nate – Shawn was at his event and gave him good feedback, and followed up on action items, i.e., hole over a creek where it should be roped, or a mando should be removed. Also need to look at courses in the light of recruiting more women to play – some course changes could help that. Stork – every place is different, with different relationships; a key contribution of the PDGA. Future – site visits and meeting the specific criteria prior to awarding bids. And having repeat bidders in the pipeline for future events.

Chuck – running a test event on a course after the proposed changes have been made would be a good vetting process. Part of the site visit checklist. Andrew – need to fund people like Shawn to do these site visits, and multiple visits after initial contact, to make sure the changes are being made. Stork – someone who is hosting a future event should attend the same event the year prior and give a preview presentation of what they have planned for their year. Mike – more visits by CVB people as well as TDs.

Shawn – living document and all suggestions for players on tour are welcome. Jay – many major events with the PDGA name behind it have had some serious “misses” – need more of these kind of visits; a person dedicated to this process. Sarah – technical standards document for courses might be helpful for TDs; Mike will work up a preliminary draft for the TD documents and resources page – a best practices document. Sarah – include standards for FPO, using data to make decisions, and not always ratings. Elaine – course design is important, but there are tournament standards that need to be met (i.e., water, restrooms, etc.) – calendar countdown to events – “to do” list to prep for events. Mike – there is a timeline in the agreement they sign for an event. Shawn – some courses are set up temporarily on golf courses and can’t be viewed in advance (except on paper).

## **Closing Remarks (Menickelli)**

3:20 Break and end of day, enter into Executive Session

## **DAY 2**

The meeting was called to order at 9:01 by Justin Menickelli.

**Disc Golf Pro Tour (Steve Dodge)** – (presentation) - Pro Tour Update: how the PDGA and Pro Tour can collaborate to grow the sport. Steve apologized for how he handled interactions with the PDGA in the past, however, would like to see the PDGA and DGPT work together to elevate MPO and FPO competitive

events. Would like to see events that are geographically sensible, with increased media coverage, and a spectator friendly environment. In the 2<sup>nd</sup> year of the DGPT, they have seen increases in YouTube views, Facebook reach, average watch time 33 minutes – people are watching.

Steve - would like to see NT and DGPT run as co-branded events to develop the best overall schedule (Sweeton), increase interest in watching (Gregoire), develop consistency across venues (Downes). This would make it easier for pros to tour and eliminate confusion amongst fans between what is an NT, DGPT, DGWT, etc.

Steve - recommended the focus for 2018 – grow the women and grow the kids. A Path Together – co-branded events; develop tier for DGPT events and media badge; work together on standards for premier events, continue to build the partnership. Test: Vibram and Ledgestone become NT and DGPT in 2018. Standards creation for premier events – baskets, tee pads, weather policy, par, discipline, etc.

Steve - presented a \$10,000 women's initiative partnership proposal for the PDGA to consider. The \$10,000 would be used to increase FPO experience at events, while helping to promote, sustain and grow women's participation in the sport. The key element would be the creation of a Women's Hospitality Tent where FPO players could go to relax and prepare during tournaments.

Discussion: Significant discussion ensued from the Board and Summit attendees. General theme of discussions included; overall support for females in disc golf, improving overall relationship and partnership between the PDGA and DGPT, ensuring this makes sense for the long running PDGA National Tour and the players, and continuing and enhancing existing partnerships between the PDGA and DGPT. Dave West recommended the proposals be discussed by the Board in executive session and worked with the staff first.

**MOTION:** Bob Decker moves to ask the staff to move forward with negotiations with Steve to come up with a mutually-acceptable contract for collaboration for 2018, due to the Board by November 10, 2017 (amendment by Shawn). Elaine seconds.

Discussion: Elaine – Dave's concern will be addressed in the negotiation details; this is a process. Steve – the co-branding is what is critical. Matt – should be an NT; already work together for A tier events. Steve – branding together on A tiers. Jeff Spring – What do these 2 resources look like when working together? The support of the Pro Tour and the current National tour – having more resources. What next steps can we take and how can we elevate these events? Jay – Steve is asking for a basic sponsorship. Higher conversation – do we want competing tours? From the player perspective, there is power and strength in the 2 organizations working together. Touring players are pushing for this growth. Sarah – the Pro Tour is dedicated to the pro players, while the PDGA has a much larger membership to take care of. The tier does matter. Des – Steve is for-profit, and the PDGA is non-profit and where do they fit in together. Steve – not hung up on the tier. Let us work out the details and some goals. And if we meet the goals then we can move forward for a unification for 2019. Mike – We're already working with Steve, but need to have the Board give direction on what they want. Joe – reminded Steve that the PDGA already provides support to the DGPT and this proposal is to consider whether we want to test 2 events as co-branded in 2018, and if successful, consider adding more in 2019. All of this discussion is conceptual at this point.

**VOTE:** Justin – yes, Dave West – yes, Kevin – yes, Dave Foss – yes, Shawn - yes, Bob – yes, Elaine – yes, Nate – abstain

**10:35 – BREAK**

**Majors (Heinold)** – (Handout) – Need to take more control of the current major events that happen every year. Recommend 4 consistent pro majors every year. Goal to start a discussion about getting to that point. Goal to potentially create another major (professional side only) for 4 consistent events annually. Need to make them “can’t miss” tournaments. Need to commit to providing resources to make them top events.

Discussion: Kevin – we may only get one bid a year; may not be other options. Elaine – idea to create a feedback form for top TDs on why they bid for majors, what they want, why they don’t want to host. Nate – may need more staff; add more resources to the majors. Justin – 2018 there are 10 majors scheduled; 3 professional majors plus women’s nationals. Are you saying we need to commit more resources to what we have? Or more majors? Major – a tournament in which a champion is crowned. Nate – the PDGA doesn’t have the authority to make some events “major”. Brian - not going to have Japan open or Australian open in the foreseeable future; Europe is in flux as well; supporting them from the PDGA is a distance and resource issue. Nate – up to the PDGA to establish consistent majors. Zach – re Pro Worlds – the PDGA staff should not be the tournament staff and host. Nate – the PDGA should partner with the TDs running these events. Jeff – tradition and growth. There needs to be a definition of how a tradition starts; and growth – new players, spectators. Nate – trying to create tradition of 4 majors. Jay – 9 majors last year; what are the PDGA majors? 4 world championships, USDGC. Justin – we are attempting to create tradition currently. Worlds is a big thing. Stork – entrepreneurial events that are great events should also be included. Mike – PDGA is traditionally tasked with crowning world championships and national championships for their membership. Sarah – already have these events in place? Elaine – should focus our resources on worlds so that TDs are anxious to bid for them. What would make that happen? Dave Foss – improve on what we already have; train TDs; make what we have better. Sarah – no promotion of US Women’s; some years are better than others; always different venues and TDs. Joe – we have hundreds of cities asking about bidding for worlds events; asking how to do it, and what they need to provide as a host; secondary benefit of majors – to help spread awareness of the sport, bringing in new courses in new cities. Brian – strength of PDGA is its willingness to experiment; world championships – the organization’s showcase events that we own; much greater priority to make the worlds the best. Eventually the “worlds” will be hosted in Europe.

### **11:30 BREAK**

**2018 PDGA Staff Planning (Chargualaf, Downes, Gregoire)** – Joe – Mike and Matt will provide an update on their roles, responsibilities, and workload while supporting Majors and NTs on the road.

Mike – On the road: every event is different. 10 majors this year. 6 NT events = 120 days of travel; 16 events. 12-hour days or more. 1500 hours/yr. Begins when the event is awarded. Work with the TDs from start to finish, including post-event reviews. Doing way more than his original job description listed – greatly increased. Matt – we are the face of the PDGA on the road. And they both go above and beyond the minimum. Agree that the quality of events need to improve, but there is not enough time or resources. “Off season” just means not traveling – still have lots to do and catching up with office work that had to be postponed.

*Discussion:* Nate – they are both phenomenal. Bob – could this be due to poor TD training? Mike – definitely in some cases. Jay – staffing is the best, tangible way for using membership fees. Terry – is there a certain amount of help you would request? Defining new responsibilities? Mike – on site help to take stuff off of their plates. Dave Foss – what do you need? Steve – the organization is not scaling with our membership and events. Mike – marketing and promotion person would be good. Kevin – should hire a laborer and have Mike in a more managerial role.

## **12:07 LUNCH BREAK**

1:00 Meeting is called back to order by Justin

**PDGA Europe/International Report (Hoeniger)** – (handouts) - Demographics, European Board documentation, financial documents.

Demographics – 6,500 current members in Europe, 650 sanctioned events, 3x the size from 5 years ago. 25 countries, with 4 countries accounting for 60% of tournaments and 75% of members (Finland, Sweden, Norway, Estonia). Asia/Oceania – Australia and New Zealand growing; Japan – static, predominantly recreational; Thailand, South Korea, China (new). Latin America – next growth area. Brazil – first PDGA-sanctioned event; Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Honduras; Mexico. Africa – one guy in Ethiopia – Ethiopian Open in February 2018. Canada – re-investing Canadian dollars in Canadian disc golf has been successful – 979 members, 200 more than last year; 84 events.

Financials (handout) – investing in Canadian events and members.

PDGA Global – governed by current BOD. Handles things like translating the new rules book into other languages.

PDGA Europe – handout. PDGA Europe BOD has been elected, including Elaine King and Terry Calhoun as US appointees. Priorities for moving forward – 1) agreement between PDGA and PDGA Europe; first draft is in review. 2) PDGA Europe by-laws – Terry Calhoun is leading. 3) Fulfillment – going to survey the countries and members to see what PDGA Europe wants in terms of fulfillment. 4) Financial.

Moving forward: Joe will be participating in the European BOD meetings. European representation on global committees (handout?). Elaine will work with Europe BOD and the committee heads.

WFDF – Now a document where WFDF recognizes that the PDGA as the governing body for disc golf. Acknowledging PDGA more in media coverage. (WFDF is the governing body of disc sports as a whole in Europe, under IOC rules. Implications moving forward – PDGA USA versus PDGA Global, etc.)

Joe – recognizes Brian for all of his work with the international work, especially developing PDGA Europe.

## **2:00 BREAK**

**Technical Standards (Homburg)** – (handout) – Trends in disc technology. Targets that catch discs better. Rapid rise in the number of approved discs. Charts in handout on discs by manufacturer, and number of PDGA approvals by year for discs and targets since 1990.

Major goals/current and proposed activities in handout – donating all of his collection of discs tested to the PDGA – now in storage. Working on a database (currently attach photos and spreadsheets to email messages); working with Steve to enter the info into the database and the board, etc., can view all the data in one place (including photos); interactive and including approval; tagging the baskets he has to organize them, use them for school demos and temp courses, should end up at the PDGA someday (Stork – discussion of having a “grove” of targets in the woods at Wildwood to play through).

Should the PDGA be responsible for testing the effectiveness of targets to catch discs? A lot of variables to test. Nate – no, the PDGA should not be responsible; but it would be an interesting study. Elaine – more of an academic study. Terry – Steve Dodge has also talked about undertaking a study of targets and setting standards. Andrew – not a PDGA project, but if such a thing was done, it would be worth it to the PDGA to

review the results. Joe – from a manufacturing perspective there may be baskets without inner chains that maintain a high level of disc “catchability”. Less metal equals lower cost to produce and ship. We may want to relook our criteria for certifying championship baskets. Stork – the PDGA has a history of staying out of the business of approving specific discs, targets, etc.; “agnostic”; our standard for championship baskets was intended for a certain catching ability – now an innovation comes along and achieves the same catching ability – should we re-examine our standard? Stork believes that we should explore this kind of situation – does this basket fit comfortably in the range of other baskets we approve; he would like the board to task the Tech committee to check into this particular basket; and what are the implications for our standards? Elaine – we have set standards that imply a better target, but are they actually better? Need a reproducible way to test catchability. Quantifiable. Do we want to investigate further, potentially changing the measurement standard for a championship basket? Chuck – current process measures failure, not success. All we need to do is add to the specification that they can add a chain deflection device that does not allow cut-throughs. May not be as complicated as we think. Joe – question is do we want to investigate further? Dave Foss – shouldn’t the onus be on the manufacturer to prove it? Zach – let the manufacturer prove the worth to us. Stork – is the board giving the tech committee the task of getting back to the manufacturer or do we use this opportunity re-examine the current standards? Do we have the approval to work on a response and bring it back to the board? Justin – yes. Elaine – should we be open to changing our standards for championship baskets in terms of technical standards?

**Closing Remarks (Menickelli)** – thanks to all attendees; Very productive and professional.

**3:06 Executive session**