

PDGA Europe Annual Review & Planning Teleconference – Minutes (Final)

Date: Sunday November 3, 2013

Time: 2100h in Finland/Baltic States, 2000h in Continental Europe and Sweden/Norway, 1900h in UK, 1400h in Toronto and Georgia

Attendees: Brian Hoeniger (PDGA), Tapani Aulu (FIN), Paul Francz (ET/CH), Jonas Grunden & Christer Kohler (S), Bernd Wender (A), Hans Nagtegaal (NL), Jörg Eberts (D), Darius Gricius (LT), Renita Cameron (I), Rasmus Sepp (ES), Lukas Filandr (CZ), Gatis Kurzemnieks (LV).

Regrets: Brian Graham (PDGA), Neil Webber (UK), Sinus Frank (DK/ET), Florence Dumont (F), Boris Lazzarotto (CH), Carlos Rio (E)

Minutes

Due to an office error in the set up of the meeting time with Webex, the meeting started 1 hour later than scheduled.

2013 PDGA Europe Summary

2013 will be another year of solid PDGA Europe demographics with 2150 current members and 265 PDGA Tour events expected by year end. The European Open raised the bar for Major events. As of the recent ratings deadline 250 of 255 Euro events held to date had submitted their reports. In short the overall picture is very positive. Reliable and timely PDGA support and services to Europe continues, including office services and ratings, Marco Polo program, funding of translations, on site presence and sponsorship at Major events. In future PDGA will only send banners to the countries and TDs. The support packages with other materials will no longer be sent due to unreliability in these packages reaching their destinations. Renita requested that PDGA contact EDGE saying Europe interested in translating EDGE into other languages.

2014 PDGA Europe Major & USDGC Qualifiers

PDGA will request to USDGC that the following 3 events be the 2014 USDGC International Qualifiers. PDGA will provide support to these events per previous years.

1. Major – June 5-7 Japan Open
2. Major - July 17-20 European Masters at Jarva Park in Stockholm presented by Jussi Meresmaa and Innova Europe. Event will have live TV coverage in Finland, and possibly elsewhere in Scandinavia. Paul advised that Switzerland has given Jussi permission to use the event name “European Masters.”
3. August 18-24 - European Championships in Switzerland.

Pdga-europe.com Report

As Sinus was unable to attend the meeting, he will report shortly to the yahoo group.

2013 EuroTour Review

Paul summarized the 2013 Series. About 800 total participants, 500+ unique participants. Total income when received about EUR 5100. Want to payout about at least EUR 3000 in bonuses but 5 events still to send in their fees before this can be completed.

Review of EuroTour Manager position

Brian noted this position needed review by the Committee, in part because it had been 7 years since Paul was appointed. He summarized the position as - in 2013 PDGA needs a proactive person in this position, who oversees the ET calendar, reviews and reports on the events, collects the fees and reports annually on the finances, calculates the ET player standings (with Sinus), and distributes the medals and bonuses in a timely manner (ideally at the ET Finals). Moreover, earlier in 2013 Paul had advised he would be stepping down after this year, however now he was reconsidering. Paul confirmed he wanted to stay on and do the job well. Christer asked Paul if helping to run the 2014 Euro Championships would make it difficult for him to manage the ET. Paul said he had recently finished closing up a company, is now working half time, and so will have enough time for both projects. The group had no objection and Paul will continue as ET Manager. Renita also suggested appointing an ET Marketing Director, others offered that such a position could be commission-based, Brian H said he would discuss this idea with Brian Graham.

2014 EuroTour Review of A and B tier standards

Jonas summarized the discussions of the appointed sub-group (Jonas, Hans, Paul, Brian H) who had been tasked with making the EuroTour more attractive to the top players.

He recommended the group approve the following:

ET A tiers = MPO MPM MPG FPO divisions only.

B Tiers = TD also has option to add MPS MA1 FA1 MJ1 (any others?).

Maximum 8 events total including up to 3 A tiers which award double points

After discussions the group voted as follows:

- Maximum 10 events in Series, maximum 3 A tiers, no more than 2 A tiers in North or South
- Count your top 4 event points, can include maximum 2 A tiers
- There is no longer any requirement that players compete at both North and South events in order to be included in the points standings..
- The ratio of EuroTour points between A and B tier will be 3:2. "Double points" for A tiers was viewed as potentially diminishing the value of B tiers.

To do: Brian will draw up the 2014 ET Points table

2014 EuroTour Schedule

Renita requested that an ET sub-committee be formed to vet ET event applications. It was agreed that Paul, Hans, and Christer would serve on this sub-committee.

To do: Paul will design and post a 2014 EuroTour event application/sanctioning form (DONE).

Deadline for countries to submit their applications to Paul is November 25. Paul, Hans, Christer will then review the applications and make recommendations to the PDGA Europe group. The goal is to complete and announce the ET schedule by December 1. By early December Paul will also Brian with the event details to build the ET calendar in the PDGA Tour schedule. By March 1 Paul will design an on-line form for ET event evaluation to be distributed to the host countries, ET event TDs and players.

2014 PDGA Prices Processes and Standards

Brian spoke to the PDGA's desire to globalize more of its standards and processes and to simplify its systems as possible, especially where this can reduce the work of the PDGA office and the country representatives. The new PDGA website, which is about to be launched, will provide a platform on which to build systems for the future aimed at enhancing the members, the TDs, and the staff's experience.

Process based changes for 2014 are:

1. On line self service event sanctioning. The countries were strongly in favour of this when surveyed earlier in 2013. The new on-line sanctioning form has been tested and will display on the new website.

Each country to choose its option:

- a. Each TD sanctions their event(s) at pdga.com and pays for each event via paypal/credit card.
- b. Country association sanctions their events at pdga.com and has option to pay en masse at a later time.

Note - TD must be a current PDGA member and an official for 2014 events to be approved and displayed at pdga.com.

To do: By December 1 Brian will send out more detailed instructions on how international event sanctioning will work in 2014.

2. On line individual self serve memberships . The on-line membership sign-up page will remain the same in terms of look and process. See <http://www.pdgastore.com/store/memberships.html> . But all the prices there are now set to match the prices on the Affiliated Country memberships Batch Form. This makes it easier for the countries to tell their members to renew or join directly at pdga.com . A new online memberships module will be a big project and the PDGA IT Director hopes it can be completed for 2015.

To do: Brian will detail how the memberships process options will work in the 2014 "PDGA Protocol" document.

Event/Player System Changes for 2014 are:

1. Guide to PDGA Europe → Guide to PDGA International. Brian will see if he can build the other international countries into the 2014 Guide which would begin with a section on the International program and the basic systems and standards common to all countries. It would then have sections on Europe, followed by Asia/Oceania and Other Countries.

2. The Ratings Ranges for Am divisions as found here:

<http://www.pdga.com/tour/standards#divisions-ratings-points-factors> will be implemented globally. Amateur players with ratings are not allowed to compete below their ratings division. Finland said they were following the PDGA system. Brian advised that 1 way of dealing with this easily is, in events with 1 Am division, to always declare that division MA1. Jonas was cited as questioning the Amateur prize system. Brian advised that the PDGA Am Worlds and some of the other leading USA Am events were switching to a True Am payout, in which the top finishers receive trophies and the rest of the Am payout is in equal player packages for all, and that the countries were welcome to do this. Hans asked at what rating is a player considered to have crossed from Am to Pro? Answer - While there is no fixed point at which an Am must turn Pro, the PDGA uses 970 as the rating below which a Pro can play MA1 so 970 could be judged a basic measure of this threshold.

3. International event sanctioning fees are being raised by \$25/event to A \$100 B \$75 C \$50, bringing them in line with USA/Canada = 1 global standard. Brian advised this was the 1st raise since system began in 2007, no raises were anticipated for 5+ years. 95% of INT events have been sanctioning as C tier for \$25, while the cost of ratings calculation alone to PDGA is \$12 per event. INT events do not pay player fees (except for EuroTour which stay in Europe). INT memberships & events = 16% of PDGA activity, 5% of income. New projects such as the PDGA website also service the INT members and countries. Brian advised that the smaller countries for whom the increase in sanctioning fees will present a real problem can request a “credit” such as PDGA has given to Australia.

Lukas noted that if the sanctioning fees are being increased then there should not be any credit card processing fee. We are asking the TDs to do this work which saves PDGA costs, therefore this additional fee should be waived. Brian agreed and said he would review this with the office.

Other 2014 PDGA system info:

- In the event report form TDs will specifically be asked if event had pro payout, to improve data accuracy. The report form will also be checked for any functionality problems.
- Event Tier standards remain same
- Basic membership costs remain the same: Pros \$30, Ams/Juniors \$20. Add Magazine \$40, Add New Member Disc \$20 (not many INT members order these merchandise items which have gone up in price reflecting postage/delivery costs)
- The PDGA will be examining ways of making the INT country payments system easier to manage accurately

2014 European Championships

Paul outlined that the event website is almost ready to go. Registration will begin January 1, and the allocation of places to the countries will be very similar to 2012. The event is receiving a lot of local government support including from the Swiss Olympic Committee. Christer noted that the ECs are the week after Worlds and this will make it difficult for Euro players to attend both events. Paul agreed that higher tier (ie Major) events need to be scheduled before lower tier (the ECs are an A tier) but that this was the only weekend that was going to work with the local authorities.

2015 Expo – Milan Italy

Renita shared her ambitious vision regarding Disc Golf’s participation in Expo 2015 Milan. She talked about a budget/goal of €100,000 with manufacturers contributing €5000 each to participate, event spokespeople like Nikko Locastro and Holly Finley, involving EDGE, World’s Biggest, with the PDGA contributing a team to help organize and deliver activities including an Expo Open, the European Womens Championship etc., over the 6 month life of the Expo.

In response, Brian asked for the countries’ interest in the project because for the PDGA to get involved it would expect PDGA Europe to also help significantly. Tapani said these are great ideas, but doesn’t see how they will all happen. While Finland would like to help, because their key people are already very busy, they would only be able to help a little. Christer said the budget was very high and that DG Italia was not ready for an event that big. Renita acknowledged there are only 23 players in Italy and she would need a lot of help.

Paul spoke about Switzerland's experience at Expo 2002 which included a 1 week presence amounting to a small platform for disc golf along with other sports, brochures distribution, a putting green, and an invitational event. He said the outcome was lots of contacts but because the Expo offered so many other activities in the end the only contacts that panned out were in the host country Switzerland where the result was 2-3 new courses. His advice was to lower expectations, the Expo should give dg a platform at modest cost, as is Renita's vision is too fantastic. Brian confirmed that PDGA shares these concerns, and encouraged Renita to set her sights lower and then over deliver. He suggested she focus on a Worlds Biggest promo event with WB support and that the big demonstration type event could be the EuroTour Finals in the fall of 2015 which the countries and PDGA could help with. Renita asked for € 10,000 from PDGA to help start building publicity and to attract the sponsorship needed. She also asked PDGA to write a letter of support for her and the Expo 2015 project to the manufacturers. Tapani suggested Renita get Disc Golf Mania (Jussi M) involved.

It was agreed that the countries will be surveyed about their interest and participation in Expo 2015.

To do: Brian will draw up the survey and review it with Renita, before sending it to the country representatives. Deadline for votes to be received will be November 30.

European Disc Golf Federation

Paul said the creation of this continental body will fill a void by giving both the ECs a continental championship event, and the national associations, the standing and credibility needed to apply for official recognition by a SportsAccord member (ie WFDF) and thereby obtain official (ie national sports administration) funding. These continental bodies are a tradition within organized sports in Europe. **Once established the EDGF will largely be a paper organization with this limited but important purpose. It will not be a competitor to PDGA which is the long term global player's association and sanctioning body. In fact it holds the potential to bring PDGA and WFDF closer together, thru joint sanctioning of the 2014 ECs where PDGA Rules of Play would be in effect, etc.**

6 countries are committed to the EDGF so far – CH, D, F, A, B, (?) , others are being kept informed and are invited to join at their leisure. The EDGF will be officially launched at the 2014 ECs.

Bernd Wender from Austria mentioned; "we will be able to receive substantial financial support for participating in international events by the Austrian sports administration, if these events are sanctioned by an organisation which is member of SportAccord (the international body). For the EC 2014 this could be achieved if it is a WFDF sanctioned event".

Any other Business

There being none, the meeting was adjourned at 1840 hrs Toronto time = 1240 & 140 AM in Europe.