



The Benefits of PDGA International Membership

Part 1: What is the PDGA?

The Professional Disc Golf Association (PDGA) is an international not-for-profit organization based in Georgia, USA. Founded in 1976, the PDGA is run by its member-players, and serves as the governing body for the sport of disc golf.

As a primary stakeholder in the growth and development of disc golf, the PDGA partners, supports, and works with National Associations, disc golf clubs, parks departments, Tournament Directors, manufacturers, retailers, promoters, and the media.

The PDGA is based on an annual membership and tournament system. In 2009, the PDGA had 14000 active members, and sanctioned more than 1000 competitive disc golf events for men and women of all age groups and skill levels. Each year the PDGA Tour includes hundreds of local and regional events, the season-long National Tour and EuroTour Series, the PDGA Professional and Amateur Disc Golf World Championships, the USDGC, and other Major events.

Traditionally focused on the USA and Canada, PDGA activity in other countries has been growing exponentially since 2005, when the International Program was introduced. Today there are more than 1200 PDGA international members and 150 Tour events in Europe, Japan, Taiwan, Australia, and New Zealand. Elsewhere, in Latin America, South Africa, China, and other corners of the globe where disc golf is beginning to take flight, the PDGA serves as a resource base for building the game at the grassroots level.

The PDGA has a staff of five, led by the Executive Director, who is appointed by and reports to the volunteer Board of Directors. Part-time Consultants are also used on specific projects including the International Program. The seven person Board of Directors are elected by the membership and serve two year terms. Throughout its brief history the PDGA has relied heavily on a large cadre of dedicated volunteers – the Tournament Directors, the Committee members, and so on - and it is these committed volunteers who are the real backbone of the organization and the sport.

Part 2: Benefits of PDGA Membership

There are many benefits of being a current PDGA member. Some are direct benefits to the individual, while others are more indirect, and reflect the growth of the sport as a whole.

The direct benefits of PDGA membership include:

1. All renewing members receive a basic membership package including current year membership card, annual tour/member information, PDGA logo bag tag and sticker.
2. New, first-time members also receive lifetime member #, new member disc and mini, and the latest rules book. Renewing members receive a complementary copy of the rules book whenever a new edition is printed.
3. Current members are eligible to compete in all levels of PDGA Tour events where they earn points towards invitations to Major events including the PDGA World Championships. PDGA members track their tournament season and career results at their own personal stats pages at www.pdga.com .

4. PDGA members also gain their own very cool player rating, based on their round by round performances at Tour events. The PDGA Ratings system measures a player's ongoing level of play, enabling them to compare their game with friends and rivals, and with the best disc golfers in their country and around the world.
5. Current members also have the option to receive the informative PDGA e-newsletter (free), and to purchase a subscription to the PDGA magazine
6. Participation in the members only Disc-cussion Board at www.pdga.com
7. Merchandise discounts at www.pdgastore.com and www.idgcproshop.com

PDGA Member fees are also used to support many other activities and programs – the indirect benefits of membership – including:

1. The development, maintenance, and innovations to the PDGA database and websites.
2. The on-line and printed worldwide Course Directory which now has more than 3000 listings in 30+ countries.
3. Live hole-by-hole coverage of Major and National Tour events at www.pdga.com .
4. The work of the PDGA Committee members who review and revise the Rules of Play, test and approve discs and baskets for sanctioned play, develop the Tour and competition standards, oversee the course and player ratings system, and examine other important aspects of disc golf from the environment to how to grow women's play.
5. The marketing of disc golf to the public, sponsors, and the media, including the National Tour (USA/Canada) and EuroTour (Europe) Series, print materials such as the Tour Program and Tour posters, photography, and DVDs on disc golf instruction and leading events.
6. The International Program, which is strengthening and supporting the growth of disc golf and the PDGA brand in 18 affiliated countries in Europe, Asia, and Oceania. Beyond providing sanctioned PDGA Tour events and the benefits of membership, the International Program is fostering the globalization of the Rules, competition formats, and other standards, and is increasing international play. The Rules of Play and other key PDGA information are also being translated into and published in other languages. This Program is steered by the International Director and by the PDGA Europe and Asia/Oceania Country Representatives, as appointed by each participating country's national disc sports or disc golf governing body.
7. The International Disc Golf Center, in Wildwood Park, Columbia County, Georgia, which opened in April 2007. A fabulous resource and headquarters for the sport, the IDGC is home to the Disc Golf Hall of Fame, the Steady Ed Headrick Museum, the PDGA offices, and 3 world class courses.
8. The PDGA's fulfillment house partner, where direct mailings, memberships, TD, country and volunteer support packages, merchandise orders, world's invitations and player registration, and many other items are assembled, mailed out, received, and processed.

All these PDGA activities and programs build credibility for disc golf and contribute to the formalization and growth of the sport. In short, as a PDGA member you enjoy all the direct benefits of membership as listed above, while also supporting and promoting the development of the sport and the PDGA around the world.

Join the PDGA today! It's a great deal for you AND for disc golf!