

P.E. SPORTS AND ACTIVITIES

DISC GOLF



“I hate losing. I have a bigger hate for losing than I have a passion for winning.”

Paul McBeth, American professional disc golfer, five time PDGA World Champion

INTRODUCTION

Disc golf is playing golf with a frisbee. Some call the game frof (frisbee and golf). The game is very much like the traditional game of golf played with a golf ball. Instead of using golf balls and golf clubs, disc golf players throw a frisbee-like disc into a basket or at a target. Scoring is easy, count the number of throws. The player with the lowest score wins the match. Thus, the object of disc golf is to finish the nine or eighteen target course with the fewest number of throws.



As with traditional golf, each hole is started by a player throwing his or her disc from the tee box area and is finished when the disc is finally thrown into the basket or designated target.

This relatively new game is quickly growing in popularity. According to a survey of disc golf players, over fifty percent of current players have been playing the game for less than two years. It is played all over the United States and Canada as well as around the world. As of 2014, there were more than 3,500 established courses. Disc golf courses are 9, 18, or 27 holes and have a wide variety of difficulty levels. Some, like their golf course counterparts, have different tee boxes and alternate basket placements for variety.

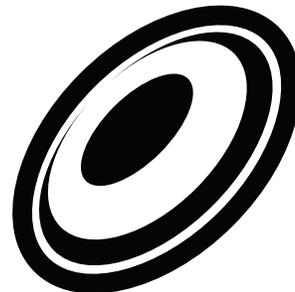
As with traditional golf, this game can be enjoyable to play by a range of ages and physical conditions.

HISTORY

Some point to an activity popular in Saskatchewan, Canada in the 1920s for the true beginning of Disc Golf. A boy names Ronald Gibson convinced a group of his elementary school friends to participate in what he called “Tin Lid Golf.” They laid out a course on the

school grounds with trees and fence posts as targets for their tin plates. They played the game for several years, with more sophistication as the targets were established farther apart and with some hazards introduced.

The game was reborn with the invention of the Frisbee in the middle of the twentieth century. Wham-O acquired the rights to the “Pluto Platter,” a flying disc that soon became known as the “Frisbee.” It wasn’t long before frisbees were thrown at targets. Wham-O encouraged users of the frisbee to invent their own games with the device. In fact, printed on the underside of each disc was this: “Play catch. Invent games. To fly, flip away backhand. Flat flip flies straight. Tilted flip curves. Experiment!”



One experimenter was Kevin Donnelly from Newport Beach, California. He invented a game called Street Frisbee Golf in 1959. He held tournaments at nine of the city’s playgrounds and publicized them throughout the area. Wham-O picked up on it and, in 1965, offered prizes for the winners. The tournament used hula hoops as holes and published a set of rules with hole lengths, pars and even penalties. The game was gaining traction. “Steady Ed” Headrick was a designer at Wham-O. It was Headrick who designed and installed the first standardized target course in what was then known as Oak Grove Park in La Cañada Flintridge, California. Ed’s work for Wham-O Corporation earned him the reputation as the “Father of Disc Golf” and is greatly responsible for bringing the game to the international community. While at Wham-O, Headrick redesigned the disc. He reworked the rim height, disc shape, diameter, weight and plastics, creating a controllable disc that could be thrown accurately. Headrick marketed and pushed this professional model of Frisbee and Frisbee as a sport. Ed Founded The International Frisbee Association (IFA) and began establishing standards for various sports using the Frisbee.

Headrick coined and trademarked the term “disc golf” and patented the Disc Pole Hole, the first disc golf target to incorporate chains and a basket on a pole. He designed the target as he was tired of arguing over what counted as a scoring disc with his friends.

HOW DISC GOLF IS PLAYED

The essence of Disc golf is simple: Throw the disc. Get it in the target.

In its most basic form, the player will use one disc, often a Frisbee disc, and work their throw closer to the target until the disc goes in the proper place and the score for the hole is finalized. Even at this basic level, the game can be quite a bit of fun.

As players become more advanced and sophisticated, they are taking course design as well as the other elements of the game to a new level. While early in the history of the game targets were trees or fence posts in the woods, now courses are being designed and laid out in under-used parts of parks and schools. These have become some of the most challenging and strategic courses around. All courses share the same basic elements: targets, tee pads, signage, topography, and most important, safety.

Targets

The first specially designed targets were known as “tonal poles” because of the sound they made when hit. These poles consisted of a metal pipe placed on a smaller pipe. When the disc hit the pipe, it made a gong sound. While these were much more accurate than a tree, arguments and disagreements led to the invention of the Disc Pole Hole by Ed Headrick in 1975. The basket, as it is now known in most circles, is the standard for disc golf courses.

Tee box

The tee box or tee pad is where a player begins the hole. A good course will have a tee box made of something firm designed for firm footing. Newer courses use concrete or more cost effective materials such as mulch, decomposed granite, or other natural materials. In recent years, recycled rubber mats have been developed and are starting to catch on. While many alternatives have been created, concrete is the standard.

Hazards

Like traditional golf, hazards can often add great challenge to the game. The placement of targets behind large trees or on the other side of lakes and streams make the course difficult as well as interesting.

SKILLS & TECHNIQUES

Backhand

The backhand throw is one of the most common ways to throw a disc. The player performs a backhand throw by pulling the disc from the back to front using the dominant hand.



Forehand

The forehand throw pushes the disc along the side of the body like a sidearm throw in baseball. Forehand throws generate more speed from the start since the disc is pushed instead of pulled in a backhand.



Tomahawk

The tomahawk is an overhead shot, like throwing a baseball. The players' fingers are on the inside lip of the disc to throw a tomahawk shot. This is a good shot to use when going around a big object.

Thumber

The thumber throw is similar to a tomahawk but the disc flies the exact opposite. The player's thumb is on the inside lip of the disc to throw this shot. Players often use the thumber when they need to go over a tree.

The Roller

This type of throw can be thrown either backhand or forehand and the disc will spend most of the time in contact with the ground. The disc remains in motion while traveling on its edge at a slight angle, and can travel exceedingly far in some situations. Once perfected, the roller is an invaluable versatile tool in the golfer's arsenal.

EQUIPMENT & CLOTHING

As one becomes more skilled the player looks for more challenges. With these challenges comes a need for additional skills. The more advanced players search for better discs which are designed to do specific things. There are three types of disc generally available, a driver, a mid-range disc, and a putter.



Disc Golf Disc—Driver

Disc golf drivers have a sharp, beveled edge that is good for cutting through the air. They are mainly used for shots off the tee box that need to travel a significant distance towards the basket.

Disc Golf Disc—Mid-range

Disc golf mid-range discs have edges that are beveled and slightly blunt. They are used for shorter approach shots that need to be more accurate than a driver and land near the basket.

Disc Golf Disc—Putter

Disc golf putters have a very blunt edge and are much slower than the other types of discs. They are more accurate and do not travel as far as mid-range discs.



DISC GOLF NOTES

Disc golf shares the same joys and frustrations of traditional golf, whether it's sinking a long putt or hitting a tree halfway down the fairway. There are few differences, though. Disc golf rarely requires a green's fee, you don't typically rent a cart, and you rarely get stuck with a bad "tee time."

Many city parks have golf courses already set up. Many are free to play as often as you like. Disc golfers who do not have the benefit of a permanent disc golf facility in their area often "make up" courses in nearby parks and green spaces.

One of the great features disc golf shares with traditional golf is they are both played in beautiful settings. A nine-hole disc golf course can be established on as little as five acres of land, and a championship-caliber 18-hole course on 30 to 40 acres.

The ongoing fitness boom finds more people taking up recreational activities in an effort to improve health and quality of life. Disc golf provides upper and lower body conditioning, aerobic exercise, and promotes a combination of physical and mental abilities that allow little risk of physical injury.

Recent rule updates to the game of disc golf include:

- The lie, the place on the playing surface where the player takes a stance to throw, is now a rectangle area. It measures 20 cm wide and 30 cm deep, centered behind the marker
- A relief area, penalty-free out of bounds area, can be used to keep players out of certain areas of the course, such as an area under construction or zone of protected plants
- There is no longer a warning for the first stance violation and a re-throw after such a violation is not allowed
- A player who starts on the wrong hole and/or in the wrong group gets a two-throw penalty

In addition to the websites listed below, you can also visit YouTube and type in disc golf to find out more about this sport. Here you will be able to see players in action as they explain some of the basics and more of the game of disc golf.

For more information about disc golf check out these websites:

www.pdga.com

www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Disc_golf