

# Article V - Discathon

Comment: Discathon is a race in which players throw their discs, one at a time, through a circuitous 1 km course defined by a series of "tests" and "mandatories," which are typically tall trees and poles. Each mandatory describes a required flight path. The discs thrown by the players shall traverse the entire course, although the players themselves need not follow any specific path. The object is to complete the course in the shortest time possible.

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- **501 Course**

- 501.01 Description: The course is approximately 1 km in length, typically laid out within a grassland or wooded area, with marked start and finish lines. There shall be numerous stationary objects such as tall trees and poles interspersed throughout the course, of which approximately 20 to 30 will be designated as mandatories or tests. An even mix of challenging flight paths and trajectories is desirable without a left or right curve advantage. The ideal course offers the player several tests (usually 3 or 4) and many opportunities to save time which, if attempted unsuccessfully, cost additional time. A grassy, smooth

running surface is preferred with topographical change providing additional challenge and interest. See Figure 5.1.

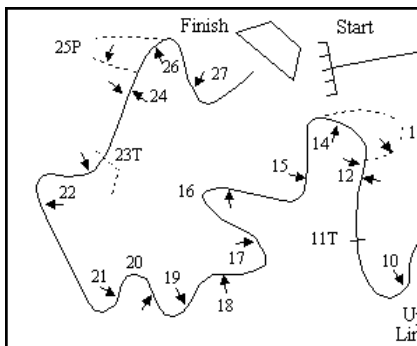


Fig. 5.1

Fig. 5.1

- o 501.02 Lines: Lines indicating the start, finish, tests, and when necessary, the plane of a double mandatory, shall be between 5 cm and 10 cm wide, marked with a non-caustic material.
  - A. *Starting Line*: There shall be four starting lanes, each lane being 2 m wide, with at least 1 m between each lane. See Figure

## 5.2.

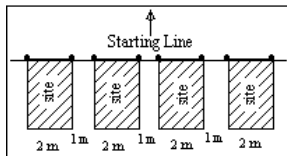


Fig 5.2

- B. *Finish Line*: The finish line should be a double mandatory, advisedly 3 m to 5 m wide and height-restricted. The entire disc must pass through the plane established by this line in the correct direction for the course to be completed.
  - C. *Test Line*: A line, behind which a player must throw in order to complete a test. If not a mandatory itself, the test line shall be marked by cones and have sidelines which extend backward from the ends of the lines at a 120 degree angle to the line. Both the foot placement and the lie disc must be behind the test line and within the sidelines extended to attempt a test throw. See Figure 5.6.
- **502 Equipment**
    - 502.01 Discs:
      - A. Each player, at his or her

discretion, shall begin the race with two or three discs, employing exactly two at any given time. Any type of flying disc may be used so long as it meets the minimum requirements set forth in Article I of the WFDF rules and the specific requirements for discathon in [paragraph 502.01\(B\)](#). The discs need not be identical. To reduce confusion, all players' discs must be distinctly marked on the upper and lower surfaces.

- B. Special Restrictions: For game design and safety considerations, discs in play must meet both the W.F.D.F. general disc specifications ([section 107](#)) and these additional specifications:
  - (1) Rim configuration: must achieve a rim configuration rating of 75 or greater (may not be beveled - see [section 108 \[D\]](#)).
  - (2) Weight: must weigh no more than 6.7 gm per cm of outside diameter.
  - (3) Rigidity: must be sufficiently flexible to bend to the point of buckling when subjected to no more than 89.3 N (9.1 kg / 20 lb) of pressing force in a standard testing procedure ([see section 108 \[F\]](#)).

- **503 Rules of Play**

- 503.01 Rules in Effect:
  - A. The WFDF rules of play shall cover play for discathon, except as set forth in [paragraph 503.01\(B\)](#).
  - B. *Variations*: Discathon may be played with slight variation of the rules regarding course length, unplayable lies, interference, penalties, race procedures and/or officiating, depending upon the circumstances in effect at the time. The variations shall be at the discretion of the tournament director, subject to the provisions of Article I of the WFDF rules. All players shall be notified of any variation of the rules prior to the commencement of play.
- 503.02 Start of Play: Players shall be assigned a starting order (not to be confused with a specific starting group), and started at 4-minute intervals in groups of four players. The starter shall have players select lanes in inverse order of the starting list, and shall begin the race with a call of, "Ready...set...throw." The cadence of the call shall be such that it is unpredictable. A player releasing his or her starting throw prior to the call of "Throw," shall be penalized 10 seconds, or may be disqualified if throwing more

than 3 seconds too early.

- o 503.03 Play: Each player will be timed while attempting to correctly negotiate the course as quickly as possible. The player begins by throwing a disc from behind the starting line, then continues throughout the course, making each subsequent throw from the lie obtained from the previous throw until his or her disc completely crosses the finish line. The player whose throws travel the course in the shortest amount of time, including time adjustments and penalties, shall be declared the winner. The responsibility for correct completion of the course, including knowledge of the designated route and all procedures of play, rests entirely with the competing player. A player not completing the course route correctly is to be given a penalty of twice the estimated time saved or 10 seconds, whichever is greater, for each such infraction. A player may be disqualified if it is determined by the head judge that the player's failure to complete the course route correctly was intentional.
- o 503.04 Throws:
  - A. *Initial Throw*: The initial throw shall be made from behind the starting line after the signal is given by the starter.
  - B. *Subsequent Throws*: All



subsequent throws shall be made from the lie area established by the previous throw with the exception of the establishment of an unplayable lie, which is governed by [Section 503.05\(D\)](#) or a self-caught flight. The throw shall be released with one of the player's supporting points at least partially within the lie area. The disc determining the lie shall remain in place while the throw is being made and shall be picked up only after the throw is released.

- *C. Technique:* Throws may be made in any direction, subject to [section 503.07](#) relating to mandatories, and in any manner.
- 503.05 Lie: The lie must be established by a disc at rest, either coming to rest naturally or by the player stopping the disc's movement once it is on the ground. A player must make a ground contact within 1.5 m of the center of the disc at rest during the release of his or her throw. A player using any incorrect placement and or throwing procedure is to be given a penalty of twice the estimated time saved or 10 seconds, whichever is greater, for each such infraction. See Figure 5.3.

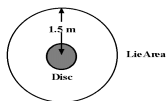


Fig. 5.3

- **A. Airborne Discs:** A player may not touch or catch his or her thrown disc or otherwise attempt to establish a lie while that disc is in the air, unless he or she is attempting to execute a self-caught flight around a mandatory. If he or she catches a disc which has correctly passed through the both planes of a single mandatory or the one plane of a double mandatory in one flight while not having broken any of the planes with his or her body, the player need not establish a lie, but may carry the disc while making up to three ground contacts before releasing his or her next throw.
- **B. Out-of-Bounds:** In the event that the disc comes to rest in an area declared out-of-bounds, it may not be retrieved. If the player

possesses two remaining discs, he or she may establish a new lie at the point where the disc entered into the out-of-bounds area.

- C. *Unplayable Lies*: In the event a throw cannot be made from a lie area such as a lie in a body of water or within thick brush, the player shall choose to either retrieve the disc or use one of the two remaining discs he or she is carrying to establish a new lie in the following manner:
  - (1) *Ground-Level Lies*: The new lie shall be located at the estimated point where the disc entered into the unplayable area.
  - (2) *Above-Ground Lies*: The new lie shall be located as close as possible to being directly beneath the unplayable disc. If the area directly under the disc is also unplayable, then the new lie shall be established as per [section 503.05\(D\)\(1\)](#).
- D. *Lost Disc*: In the event a player cannot locate one of his or her discs presumed to lie in a playable area, the player may declare a lost disc and establish a new lie with one of his or her two remaining

discs at the point he or she estimates would be the lie of the lost disc. After the completion of the course, the player shall report the lost disc to the statistician who shall assess a 10- second penalty. A player may be assessed an additional time penalty or be disqualified if it is determined by the head judge that the lost disc declaration was exploited, intentionally or otherwise, to gain competitive advantage.

o 503.06 Discs in Play:

- A. A player shall carry at least two discs which shall be actively in play throughout the traversal of the course. One disc shall establish the lie while the other is being thrown, with the discs being thrown in alternate sequence.
- B. Third Disc Option: A player may, at his or her discretion, begin the race with three discs as a safeguard against disqualification in the event of one unplayable lie, out-of-bounds, or lost disc.
- C. Shortage of Discs: If during the traversal of the course a player has only one disc remaining actively in play, that player may not continue and shall be listed as

D.N.F.

o 503.07 Mandatory:

- A. The player must traverse the course by properly negotiating the designated path. The path of the course requires completion of each mandatory in the proper order and in the proper direction. The proper direction for each mandatory shall be clearly indicated by an arrow or other signal.
- B. *Single Mandatory*: If one object is used to indicate a mandatory, the disc shall be thrown through two vertical planes on the indicated side of the mandatory in the correct order and direction to properly complete the mandatory. One plane is perpendicular to a line drawn between the mandatory in question and the previous mandatory, or if there is no previous mandatory, the starting line. The second plane is perpendicular to a line drawn between the mandatory in question and the subsequent mandatory, or if there is no subsequent mandatory, the finish line. See Figure 5.4.
- C. *Double Mandatory*: If the mandatory is defined as the area between two objects in close

proximity to each other, the disc shall be required to be thrown completely through the vertical plane connecting the two objects in the direction from the previous mandatory to the subsequent mandatory. See Figure

- D. Breaking the Plane. Breaking the plane in one direction and then in the other direction is the same as not having broken the plane. The second action undoes the first, and the plane must still be broken in the proper direction. If a mandatory is passed on the incorrect side, the player must "unwind" to correct that error. That is, the player's disc must reverse the incorrect path and subsequently break the plane in the required direction. It may be useful to imagine the disc's path as a string. To complete the course correctly, that string, when pulled taut, must break all of the mandatory planes in the correct direction.
- 5.5.

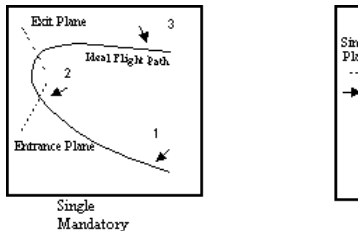


Fig. 5.4

- (1) Height-Restricted Double Mandatory: A double mandatory may also be height-restricted, establishing an upper or lower limit by stretching high-visibility tape between the two objects which define the mandatory.
- 503.08 Test: To pass the test, a player must have both his or her lie disc and foot placement completely behind the test line and complete the next "target" double mandatory in a single throw. If the player fails the test or chooses not to take it, he or she need not pass over the test line if it is not a mandatory, but shall be required to complete both the double mandatory which serves as the test target and an additional penalty mandatory immediately after the target. See Figure 5.6.

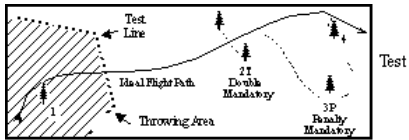


Fig. 5.6

- o 503.09 Player Conduct: The following sections are not exhaustive. Any situation in which a player may gain an unfair advantage by compromising his or her responsibilities to another player may result in adjustment, penalty and/or disqualification, at the head judge's discretion. A penalty of twice the estimated time saved shall be assessed in situations where no other player is directly affected by the violation. A penalty of four times the estimated time saved shall be assessed in situations where another player is directly affected. If no time has been saved, the amount of penalty shall be determined by the head judge, based upon the severity of the infraction.
  - A. *Etiquette*: Players shall make every effort to compete without interfering with one another. Players, while throwing, shall exercise caution to avoid striking other players or their discs in



flight. Likewise, players shall make every effort to avoid interfering with the throws of another.

- **B. *Rights of Way:*** The disc of a player who has established position at his or her lie or is in throwing motion, has immediate right-of-way over an oncoming runner. Further, whenever two players are approaching discs which have landed so closely together as to cause mutual interference, the player who has established position first has the right-of-way.
- **C. *Play of Another Player's Disc:*** If a player picks up or throws another player's disc, the player using the wrong disc may be penalized or disqualified unless he or she is able to correct his or her error by returning the disc to its original position without interfering with the progress of the other player. The head judge may consider a time adjustment or a rerun for the player whose disc was misplayed.
- **D. *Unintentional Interference:*** Because of the open nature of the course and the presence of other runners, officials and spectators, discathlon players are vulnerable

to a significant amount of unintentional interference. This includes such random factors as a disc hitting an animal, a course observer, a spectator or another racer. The risk of this kind of interference is part of the course and no adjustments to times shall be made.

- *E. Purposive Interference:* Purposive interference includes any actions committed by spectators or other runners which are intended to hamper or obstruct a player's disc in flight, his or her throwing or running motions, or his or her positioning for a throw. This type of interference also includes gross violations of running etiquette which hamper or obstruct, regardless of intention, and the carrying away of a disc by an animal. In cases of purposive interference, the head judge may award an estimated time adjustment or a rerun to the affected runner at the judge's discretion. The decision to award a rerun is based on the severity of the interference and the ability of the judge to accurately estimate the time loss.

- 503.10 Change of Conditions: If there has been an obvious change of conditions during the round, such as a start or stoppage of rain, the times shall be examined by the head judge to determine whether the change of condition resulted in a significant effect on times. If, after removing the scores which represent the worst 10 percent of the times in each group, more than 15 seconds separates the average time in each group, results shall be sectioned and an equal proportion of players from each group shall advance.

- **504 Event Procedures**

- 504.01 Officials:
  - A. *Steward*: There shall be one steward whose duty shall be to call players to the on-deck area and starting groups to the preparation area and starting line.
  - B. *Starter*: There shall be one starter who shall start the players by signaling them to come to the line 1 minute prior to the start of the race. He or she shall also signal 30 seconds prior to the start of the race, and shall give the starting call. At the start of the race, the starter shall start two watches, then turn them over to the timer.
  - C. *Timer*: There shall be one timer

who shall call out the finish times to the finish judges when the players complete the course.

- *D. Finish Judges:* There shall be four finish judges who shall assign times to the nearest second for discs crossing the finish line, recording the time on a label which shall be applied to the disc earning that time, then turning the disc and time over to the statistician.
- *E. Statistician:* There shall be one statistician who shall record all the times, as well as penalty and net times. Said times shall be recorded as the individual players claim their labeled discs.
- *F. Course Observers:* There shall be course observers who shall check for potential rule violations and observe test line and critical mandatories as the players traverse the course. In the event they witness a potential rule violation, they shall announce their appraisal, and report any uncorrected errors to the head judge after the race.
- *G. Head Judge:* There shall be one head judge who shall be in charge of the event, coordinating the other officials. He or she shall

make all final decisions on time adjustments, scratches, second runs, and disqualifications.

- o 504.02 Advancement: The number of players to advance after each round shall be determined prior to the start of play by the number of entries in the tournament.
  - A. *Preliminary Round*: Top seeded players shall be spread throughout the entire preliminary round. Approximately half the field shall advance to the second round.
  - B. *Second Round*: The 16 lowest times shall advance.
  - C. *Semi-Final Round*: The respective winners of each race of four players plus the player having the best second place time shall advance to the final.
  - D. *Final*: The five remaining players compete together, the lowest time being declared the winner.
- o 504.03 Ties: When ties must be broken, the player who had the lower time in the previous round advances or is declared the winner.
- o 504.04 Late Arrival: Players must be at the event site prepared to compete when called. The competitive order of these calls is to be posted. In the event of a player not responding to the

official's call, the following procedures come into effect: If a player fails to appear for his or her assigned starting group when called on deck by the race steward, the next player in the starting order shall move up and assume the place of the absent player. The absent player shall be called again for the next starting group. If he or she appears, he or she may start but shall be assigned a 15 second penalty. If there is no response to the second call, the player shall be listed as a scratch (SCR).

- **505 Variation**

- Controlled Pace: Controlled pace discathlon is a variation in which players move around the course at a speed that is monitored. It is particularly suggested for grand master, senior grand master and legend competitions. Each group of players is accompanied by an official who calls out their throws every thirty seconds. The call is, "Throw...one," (at 30 seconds); "Throw...two," (at 60 seconds), etc. The players are to release their throws on the call of the throw number or within ten seconds after the call. If they do not throw during this 10 second period they must wait until the next call to throw. All of the players' throws are to be made in this manner with one exception. When a player intends to make his or her final

throw of the course, he or she may throw prior to the call for that throw. If the early shot fails to complete the course, the player may not throw on the next call (the throw he or she has already taken) but must wait for the subsequent call as each player may only take one early throw each round. Except for the paced-throwing feature, all the other ground rules of discathlon apply. The play, of course, is quite different, not requiring the players to run except possibly for the final, early throw. As the players move around the course, the more efficient throwers move into the lead. The end of the race is also of strategic interest depending upon the positioning of the players and their use of the early final-throw option. On an informal basis players can call out their own throws at any pace they wish.

- **506 Glossary**

- Flight Path: The designated route the disc must travel to successfully complete the course.
- Ground Contacts: Contacts made with the ground by the player's body.
- Lie: The place where a thrown disc comes to rest.
- Lie Area: A circle with a 1.5 m radius, measured from the center of the player's thrown disc at rest. All of the

player's throws, other than the initial throw, shall be made from within this lie area established by the preceding throw.

- o Mandatory: A stationary, and preferably tall, permanent object, such as a tree or a lamp post, which establishes the required flight path.
- o Out-of-Bounds: A designated area such as a street or lake from which no disc may be retrieved and through which no player may pass.
- o Supporting Point: The part of the player's body which is supporting his or her weight or is in contact with the ground.
- o Test: An opportunity to bypass the subsequent penalty mandatory by correctly completing a designated double mandatory in one throw, released from behind the test line.
- o Unplayable Lies: Any lie which is in an area with characteristics making it difficult or impossible for the player to retrieve the disc or throw.

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