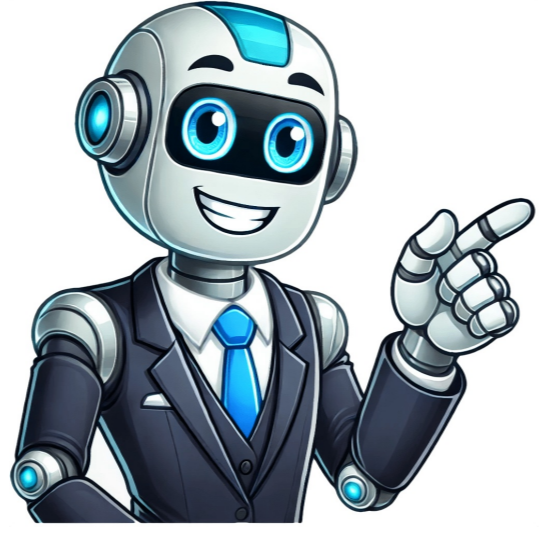


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Pro disc golfers' earnings have skyrocketed in recent years, with some players raking in significant cash purses. In 2021, the Disc Golf Pro Tour Championship boasted a record-breaking \$250,000 prize pool, eclipsing all previous tournaments. Winners Nathan Queen and Missy Gannon took home an impressive \$30,000 each, marking the largest single-tournament earnings for any pro disc golfers in history. However, these figures are still dwarfed by the purses offered in mainstream professional sports. Historically, pro disc golfers had to rely on multiple income streams to make ends meet. Even legendary players like Ken Climo worked part-time jobs until the mid-1990s, when their earnings reached \$19,000 per year – a modest sum compared to today's standards. To gain a deeper understanding of payout trends, we analyzed the earnings of pro disc golfers throughout the sport's history. Some key points to note: our data only includes cash prizes from Professional Disc Golf Association-sanctioned tournaments and does not account for non-sanctioned competitions or sponsorship deals. We will release separate information on female pro players' earnings in a future post, as their payouts vary significantly from those of male pros. Notably, a female player cracked the top 10 all-time earners list for the first time in 2021. The sport's early days saw limited prize pools, with events like the 1979 WHAM-O \$50K Frisbee Disc Golf Invitational offering a paltry \$41,000 in total cash payouts. While this tournament marked an important milestone in professional disc golf, its modest purse highlights the challenges faced by early players in attracting sponsors and maintaining consistent payout levels. The first season of the Professional Disc Golf Association saw modest prize pools, with winners earning around \$10,000 to \$20,000 per year. It wasn't until much later that purses began to increase significantly, driven by growing audience interest and sponsorships. We'll delve deeper into these trends in this post, exploring how pro disc golfers' earnings have evolved over time. To get a clearer picture of payout changes, we'll examine key statistics from past tournaments and explore the factors driving growth in prize pools. By understanding these trends, we can gain insight into the sport's development and its future prospects for professional players. **The World of Professional Disc Golf: A Shift Towards More Players Earning a Living** Payouts in professional disc golf have seen significant growth since the early days, with some players experiencing substantial earnings. While high payouts are still a rare occurrence, they have become more frequent and increased in amount. The 2021 season saw a record-breaking number of players surpassing \$10,000 in earnings, with 20 different players winning above \$30,000 dollars. The growth in purses has led to an increase in the number of full-time touring disc golfers. With larger purses available, more players are able to earn a living solely from their disc golf career. The graph shows a dramatic increase in players earning over \$10,000, with a 98% jump in the total purse between 2020 and 2021. Comparing events from 2020 to 2021, it's clear that the upward trend continues. The largest events saw significant increases in their purses, jumping from \$777,306 to \$1,222,630. The top-earning players include Paul McBeth, Ricky Wysocki, and Ken Climo, who have won a substantial amount of money throughout their careers. However, when adjusted for inflation, the earnings of some players decrease significantly. This is because a dollar doesn't go as far as it used to due to inflation. The chart showing inflation-adjusted earnings provides a more accurate picture of each player's total earnings. Overall, the growth in professional disc golf has led to an increase in the number of players earning a living from their career. While high payouts are still rare, they have become more frequent and increased in amount, providing opportunities for more players to succeed. Losing to seasoned opponents is often inevitable, but a rising trend in payouts could give younger players an edge. **Top Earners in Women's Pro Disc Golf** The top earners in professional women's disc golf are largely dominated by men, as highlighted in the article "Women's Pro Disc Golf: Top 10 All-Time Earners & More." The Climo Factor Ken Climo is widely regarded as one of the greatest disc golfers of all time, with a career spanning over three decades. His earnings tell a story of dominance, with \$137,185 earned over his first nine world championship titles. Climo's per-win earnings increased to \$1,114 during the 2000s, despite total prize money more than quintupling. He averaged an astonishing \$934 per tournament over 32 years. **Notable Achievements** Paul McBeth holds the record for most money earned in disc golf tournaments in one year, taking home \$88,903 in 2021. His sanctioned play earned him more money than any other player in a single season, adjusted for inflation. McBeth's 2021 season produced the largest earnings jump from one season to the next. Due to the pandemic, the 2020 season had a negative impact on earnings across the board, while 2021 offered the largest payouts ever, leading to McBeth's numbers skyrocketing. His total increase was \$56,174 (\$32,729 in 2020 to \$88,903 in 2021). Ten other players also surpassed the previous record of \$31,138: Paul McBeth (+\$56,174), Missy Gannon (+\$55,689), Kyle Klein (+\$47,513), Ricky Wysocki (+\$47,343), Nathan Queen (+\$37,822), Eagle McMahon (+\$36,531), Paige Pierce (+\$36,172), James Conrad (+\$34,088), Adam Hammes (+\$34,080), and Joel Freeman (+\$31,641). McBeth leads all time with earnings from PDGA events reaching \$432,908.09 after winning the Jonesboro Open last weekend, overtaking Climo and now sitting atop the money list.