



Portsmouth Darts Academy

Personal Sponsorship Guide

Portsmouth Darts Academy recognise that some Academy players have the talent and motivation to progress to competitive darts; however this can be cost prohibitive when tournament entry fees, travel and accommodation costs and equipment requirements are calculated. This is where sponsorship of the individual player may be beneficial, to support with those costs.

We at the PDA have put together this guide to support you in thinking about asking for sponsorship, what to do when sponsors approach you, and what you need to ensure you receive and provide as a result of any formal agreements made. It must be said that this is not a comprehensive guide, and you may want to consider professional legal advice depending upon the contract being presented to you/your child.

Sponsorship and what it can look like

Typically, sponsorship is a contractual agreement for a set period of time between a player and a business. The business provides money and/or physical support and/or equipment to the player/their parents in exchange for agreed upon actions. The player benefits financially, whilst the business benefits from increased brand awareness.

In exchange for sponsorship, a company may look for:

- Social media advertising
- Shirt advertising
- Positive PR and news about their business
- Product placement or recommendations
- Physical advertising at events

Usually, there are restrictions on both parties, such as not advertising competitor products or ending a sponsorship agreement early without reason. This is explored in more detail later in this guide.

Actions to Take

1. Build a Profile

Firstly, regardless of age or experience so far, it is important to start building a darts profile. Any and all achievements need to be recorded centrally, and updated regularly, in regards to performance, activity, and tournament results. Do not think small here; the more the better. Include the reach of the tournament as well; e.g. the Junior Darts Corporation reach is worldwide.

2. Build Professional Social Media Profiles

Although, as a person your child may be too young for personal social media profiles, you can set up professional Social Media profiles for them. Consider the social media that applies adequately; Facebook, TikTok, Instagram, YouTube.

You may even want to consider a free website (such as wix) to begin showcasing the achievements and activity your child is undertaking. Note, this does not have to be complex! You just need somewhere that you can direct potential sponsors to so that they can find out more about your child and the opportunities they are pursuing, so in turn they can understand the exposure they will get as a sponsor.



You need to carefully manage these profiles on your child's behalf. It is important to think about what is published, the image any posts convey, who else you follow, and what you like or comment on. You are effectively building your child's brand, so ask them what how they want to be thought of and take any of their requests into consideration.

It is recommended to start small, with 1 profile, build this up and then create another so that it is not over-whelming to begin with.

Consider somewhere your child can blog/vlog as well; with your oversight and final edit.

3. Set Social Media goals

It is important to plan your child's social media. Consider the following when thinking about what you will post

- Keep a consistent look & feel with regard to colours, fonts, designs and photo types
- Share your child's journey; what are they doing, what is coming up, how are they feeling
- Utilise multi-media. Videos create great buzz, but can be over-whelming if that's all you post online
- Recognise the need to network; follow relevant people, encourage them to follow back, build your audience to be as big as it can be – in the end, this will help secure more sponsors.

We would recommend quarterly goals around the following:

- Posts around upcoming activity
- 1 blog/vlog per month
- Increasing follower activity by a specific amount OR creating a new social media profile to build up

4. Planning and Budgeting

Develop a plan as to what your child is going to do in the next 1-3 years (all being well), and what budget would be required.

Divide different activities or events in to must do vs would like to do, and break down the costs of each. Remember to consider everything; travel, equipment, food & beverages, fees, insurance, but only for the child. Unfortunately, it is unlikely that a sponsor would be willing to contribute to your financial expenditure for taking them everywhere!

This should provide you with an understanding of what financial support is required; although it would be wonderful to ask for a huge amount, sponsors are corporate entities and will need to justify any costs so they may ask for a breakdown of what their money is going towards.

5. Develop your Sponsor Offering

You'll need to think about what you can offer any potential sponsor and develop a sponsor offering document explaining this.

Each child will be different, but we have included some ideas for you to consider – it is really important that you ONLY promise what you can deliver within the agreed time frame. You do not want to harm your child's future prospects by making them unreliable for sponsors before they are even able to manage this themselves.



You could offer the following:

- Shirt sponsorship; a logo on any and all darts shirts. Normally, you organise for your sponsors logo to go on the shirt and it is agreed that this will be worn in all tournaments and associated PR activity.
- Social Media Shout Outs: provide a direct link to the business across social media platforms on a regular basis. Use something like bit.ly so that you're able to provide exactly how many clicks your link got. You will have to identify this as an ad.
- Tagging: in updates around tournaments, you could include the sponsor via a tag – this does not have to be identified as an ad.
- News Mentions: if your child is interviewed, a promo for the sponsor could be included.
- Product placement: if the sponsor provides equipment to your child, you will probably be expected to use it and share with followers that you're using it. Think product placement in the background of vlogs, mentions in blogs.
- Website links: provide direct links to the business via your child's website

Some sponsors are happy to provide money for generalised actions, whereas others may want to sponsor something specific e.g. a particular tournament. Referring back to step 4, it is important to record everything properly so that you can always explain your costs vs. the agreed actions taken.

6. Promotion

Begin your promotion; use your social media profiles to advertise success – remembering in each and every post to;

- Tag others involved
- Thank sponsors and supporters
- Include locations if they have a social media presence (this will help improve reach)
- Create photo montages and/or video reels to share

Write to local news outlets, as well as darts news outlets with pieces to share. Typically, they will adapt wording you send through to them to fit the space they have. Every time a piece is published, save it and add it to the profile roll.

7. Approach Sponsors

Write up your sponsor offering in a formal document; there are many ways to do this but consider including the following;

- Overview; the who, the what, the future plans, previous performance
- Sponsor offerings (what you can offer)
- The plan and how the sponsor can help and the contribution required
- Links to social media profiles

And end with a call to action; find out who to contact to follow up, or what the agreement to sponsor process is.

To begin with – volume is everything. Send as many as you can to different businesses or people, and follow up once (but don't be pushy and don't bombard the same person repeatedly). If they say no, record it so that you don't approach again in the immediate future.



It is worthwhile creating a database of information regarding sponsors; a spreadsheet that details company name, contact name, dates contacted and how, plus the result can be useful for tracking and future proposals.

As time progresses, you should reach a stage where you only need to approach new sponsors when an old sponsor drops off.

It may be that, as your child progresses, you find that tailoring the offer or proposal to make it specific to sponsors is worthwhile.

Contract Minimums

It is important to make sure that any contract you enter in to has the following:

- Start and end date of the agreement
- How any renewal will be negotiated (e.g. ahead of the contract end date)
- The full company name, correspondence address, the name and the position of the person you are dealing with at the company
- The agreed upon benefits
- The agreed upon actions with clear numerical requirements e.g. 1x monthly social media shout out, tagged in EVERY tournament result post, etc.
- The restrictions required for the agreement e.g. will NOT advertise any direct competitor
- Termination options

Do's and Don'ts

- Ensure that any sponsor agreement is only mutually exclusive within reason e.g. you will agree to not be sponsored by a direct competitor, however you are allowed to get other, non-related sponsors.
- Ensure your sponsorship agreement is not conditional on winning only. Rewards for winning can be discussed, but it is not wise to enter into an agreement that requires constant winning to maintain the agreement until the end of the contract.
- Create a clear statement regarding what can be done to terminate the agreement. You do not want to have to maintain an association with a sponsor that, through their own behaviour, impacts your perception or brand. E.G if a business is found to be behaving inappropriately in some way, you have the option to terminate any and all agreements automatically WITHOUT repercussion.
- Keep track of reach throughout the year; in future this will support your negotiation ability by showing the value and benefit you provide your sponsors. Eventually, you'll be in a position to provide Return on Investment (RoI) information to sponsors.