



# ultimatum2008

annual UK ultimate magazine



# ultimatum 2008

## Welcome to the 2008 issue of Ultimatum

For me Ultimatum is a reminder of how great the UK Ultimate community is so I would not only like to thank both Dan and Jack for delivering another excellent issue but also you, the members, who make it possible by giving the writers inspiration for the articles and the photographers somewhere to point their cameras.

2008 saw many noteworthy events. The repositioning of UK Ultimate as a company limited by guarantee, so it is better able to deliver the services required of the modern sporting environment, was a significant step in ensuring we continue to be the leading nation in Europe.

This status was reinforced at the World Ultimate and Guts Championships held in Vancouver in August, which saw GB teams produce strong results in all the Ultimate divisions to qualify for the World Games for the first time. Many thanks to the coaches, medical staff, guardians, sponsors and many others who made this possible.

In domestic terms, the split season continued to prove a success with more teams than ever participating in the Open, Women's and Mixed Tours. Congratulations to each of the event, Tour and Nationals winners and in particular to all the spirit winners, notably The Brown for winning spirit awards in two divisions, Ltd Release whose 1st and 2nd teams won spirit awards on the Open Tour and GB Masters for winning spirit twice: turns out they are not a bunch of grumpy old men. [Actually, we won Spirit three times; at Tour 0, Tour 2, and Tour 3, and quite possibly won in our division at Tour 1, but at this event there was only one Spirit prize announced over all three open divisions. JG]

As ever thanks are due to all the volunteers, paid and unpaid, that make Ultimate possible by arranging,

hosting and running events that we as players can enjoy. It would be great to see more people step up and deliver events of all shapes and sizes in 2009, and I am always interested to hear how the UKU can better support this. A great opportunity to find out about, and how to contribute to, the work of the UKU would be to attend the UKU conference on January 10 2009.

Finally, the formal acknowledgment of Ultimate as a 'sport' by UK Sport/ Sport England in recent weeks is a conspicuous moment and largely due to the continuing excellent work of our CEO/Administrator, Simon Hill. We are fortunate to have Simon, who has no doubt made a difference to your Ultimate experience this year very often without your knowledge. I wish to pay tribute to his dedication, vision and hard work on your (and my) behalf. He is ably supported by many others who will also appreciate your thanks and/or a beer.

Enjoy the issue.  
*Jaimie Cross, UKU Chairman*



## Editor's Note

**I vaguely remember applying to be the editor of Ultimatum at some point earlier this year. I had quit my "real" job and disappeared off to Brazil when I read an e-mail asking for a victim to step forward.**

Imagine my surprise when, many months later and at a much less glamorous location of Mixed Tour 3, I was approached by a mysterious man named Jack. This was just before our last game on the Saturday, not long after I had attempted to gee up my horribly flagging team with some Aftershocks at the bar. A conversation ensued whereby he ran me through some important points about the editing process whilst I stood there and attempted to hide the smell of alcoholic mouthwash that was drifting towards him. Possibly not the seamless transition everyone had hoped for.

Jack's help in all this has been fantastic and without it I would surely have resorted to the Aftershock again. Massive thanks to him for his patience and fantastic design skills. Also a grateful mention to Rich Hims who is able to scan through any previously checked article and find another twenty errors in it I had already missed. Huge gratitude to all the authors and photographers who make the magazine what it is. Your commitment to the Ultimate cause and your ability to deliver when it matters is to be applauded.

A final thank you to everyone who puts in time and effort to make the UK Ultimate scene what it is. Keep up the good work.

*Dan Berry*  
If you'd like to help with Ultimatum2009, please e-mail: [bobthelandlord@gmail.com](mailto:bobthelandlord@gmail.com)



[Cover] **EUCF (Paris)**. Chevron Vs Ragnarok, James Jackson makes the grab.

© Dave Sanders 2008 [ultimatephotos.org](http://ultimatephotos.org)

**Tour 1 (Bristol)**. The Final. We got the sun Adam promised, but that wasn't all we got.

© Dave Sanders 2008 [ultimatephotos.org](http://ultimatephotos.org)

**Water** - Someone is far too clever.

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**Mixed Tour 3 (Birmingham)** - Dan Berry: People kept throwing him passes that would have been miracle catches - he got quite angry.

© Dave Sanders 2008 [ultimatephotos.org](http://ultimatephotos.org)

**A bloke** on a beach somewhere.

© Joel Wong 2008 [beachultimate.org](http://beachultimate.org)



# laying out

## a guide to getting it right

Are your layouts spectacular, but painful? Or less than spectacular and ineffective? Here are a few tips to consider when adjusting your layout technique.

### How to improve your dive:

#### The process

- Learn what to do first: break down the dive into components to understand best form.
- Practice it in a graduated way, building skills up over time. It's not a "just do it" skill as many like to think.
- Use visualization to reinforce the good and change the not-so-good (watch others, talk to others, watch videos and replay your layouts in your head).
- Doing core work (like Pilates) is great protection for laying out, as is wearing tight fitting undergarments like Under Armour compression shorts and sport bras.

### Disclaimer

Laying out can cause injuries. Dive at your own risk and learn in small, controlled steps. Don't do anything you aren't comfortable with.

### The three components of a layout: Learn to assess where your form fails

1. Take off. Are you pushing off "squared up": balanced and ready to spring?
2. Flight. What is your mental focus? How do you adjust for landing while in the air?
3. Landing. Most problems in landing come from errors made in stages 1 and 2, but you can do some correction while landing.



**Tour 3 (Mansfield).** Chevron Vs Clapham, Dave Barnard - It only hurts when you don't get the D. Unless you land on you nuts and then it hurts every time.  
**Nationals (London).** Not sure Adriano Leng (Fusion West) touched it but the dude on O dropped it. Layouts like this can win games.  
*Photos © Kate Orwin 2008 ultimatephotos.org*

### Common errors

1. Rolling versus sliding: the basics. If two people layout together the one rolling can cause injuries. It's poor form, so learn to layout well.

**TIPS:** most people who roll had an opportunity to straighten during flight. Once you've made a play for the disc, put your wrists out in front of you shoulder width apart immediately, keeping arms firm, slightly bent (flip hand with disc to get fingers away from ground). Aligning your wrists begins the process of straightening your spine which straightens your hips which straightens your legs. One hand can feel for the ground, by 1-2 inches only! You aim to land relatively flat with forearms leading the slide and the torso then taking most of the weight.

2. **Sack O Spuds: No push off, your feet never leave the ground and you just fall.**

**TIPS:** Try laying out on a plastic sheet with dish soap and warm water. Place a jacket between your take off and the start of the sheet. It will make you think about getting your feet OFF the ground to avoid running over the jacket.

3. **Commitment Phobic: waiting until the disc is 3 inches off the ground.**

**TIPS:** Waiting for a disc until it's too low shows lack of commitment, usually through fear. Do more visualizing and practicing form to make sure you are mentally ready to layout. Set a goal to layout before you think it's the right time, and don't worry about missing the disc. Practice on a plastic sheet with soap, having someone hold the disc progressively higher when your form is good.



4. **Always late: You touch the disc as the receiver catches it, they throw while you lay on the ground.**

**TIPS:** you are aiming to D the disc too close to the O player (mentally most players imagine where the O will catch the disc... instead aim to D it ahead of where they will catch it by 6-12 inches and you'll start getting the blocks). You may also be anticipating the opportunity too late - keep your head up on D to better anticipate opportunities, and commit early.

5. **Ground Control: one appendage heads toward the ground as you layout (often a bent leg, or a hand that reaches straight down instead of out in front of you). Your knees hurt, your hands/arms hurt, it's painful.**

**TIPS:** The key issue is your mental focus. You aren't comfortable with flying through the air so you reach for safety sub-consciously (fair enough). You need to do a lot of visualization, and embrace a full air layout mentally.

If you bend your knees, try two techniques: point your toes while in flight - this will help stretch your legs out while in the air and stop the knee from dropping. If you hit your quads during landing clench your butt cheeks while you slide - this pulls your legs upward an inch or so, letting you land more on the hip area. The only good bend in your legs is bringing your FEET up before landing (like a plane's tail) keeping torso/quads flat.

If you put your arm straight down the body "runs right over it" as you slide or your face/shoulders become the brake point. This can cause injury to the arm, hand, shoulder. Once in the air, think "wrists lead: out in front" to get your arms stretched out in front of you, shoulder width apart.

6. **Head hitter: you do a face plant with your head smacking the ground hard.**

**TIP:** Your hands are too far apart, so the head is your main brake point.

Bring hands shoulder width apart, straight ahead of you, arms gently bent as soon as you've made a play for the disc.

7. **Scorpion: your feet flip over your head reaching for your forehead!**

**TIP:** You are leaning forward too much on landing, so your arms and head are the main brake points rather than your torso. Because you came into the ground too steeply you break HARD and the momentum transfers to your legs because they are still in the air. Try not diving toward the ground - dive outward and reach down for a low disc or make to transfer your weight to your torso and lift your arms and shoulders up slightly after making a play for the disc.

Anja Haman



# a new spirit of the game scoring system

This year saw the introduction of a new scoring system which was questioned by some as being too complicated and too difficult to implement. Having been introduced at tournaments and leagues across the UK, we asked the people behind it to explain why they thought it was a good idea and what was the motivation behind it.

Have you seen or used the new World Flying Disc Federation (WFDF) and BULA Spirit of the Game scoring system? (<http://beachultimate.org/blog/2008/05/sotg.html> or <http://www.wfdf.org/index.php?page=rules/spirit.htm>) What did you think?

The system was developed by a committee that consisted of 11 players from Europe, the US, and Latin America. When we started our task to develop a better scoring system, we focused on the following objectives:

1. Educate players to understand what good SOTG means
2. Create standards and a standardized scale for SOTG scoring to be used worldwide
3. Show every team how good or bad their SOTG is and to give them a chance to compare with other teams
4. Determine the winner of the SOTG award as accurately as possible

We also wanted to make the system as easy as possible to use, but never at the cost of the objectives above.

Education was a big part of our discussions. With the growth of Ultimate worldwide, it becomes more and more difficult to 'control' SOTG and, although it is rule #1, it is easily over-looked. We gathered input from mailing list such as from Eurodisc and Britdisc where there were discussions about SOTG. We also looked at the 2007 WFDF Ultimate rules where rule #1 was more clearly defined than in the previous 2002 version of the

rules. Lastly, we took the BULA SOTG scoring system that was developed in early 2006 and then looked at all the comments following its use.

Using all the above information and more than 700 emails later, we had narrowed down Spirit of the Game into 7 scoring categories:

1. Respect
2. Fair-mindedness
3. Positive Attitude
4. Emotional Management
5. Avoiding body contact
6. Avoiding rule violations and fouls
7. Knowledge of the rules

For each item, we gave some examples for good SOTG. Finally we added one more scoring item: "How was the other team's Spirit compared to our own?" Arguably this is the most important item on the list because SOTG can not be measured purely objectively. It is often easy to maintain good spirit if the other team is also highly spirited – but it is very important to keep good SOTG even when your team has the impression that the other team is "less" spirited.

Our next step was to decide on a way to award points in order to measure a team's SOTG performance with a number. This was done to allow comparison of SOTG between teams within a tournament and also worldwide, and to show each team how well or poor their SOTG was evaluated by other teams.

Historically tournaments and leagues usually had a simple scoring system and the difference between the top team and the bottom team was never substantial. To change this we decided to give each item in the scoring system 3 possible scores: poor, average, excellent. From our experience at the European Championships Beach Ultimate in France and the World Ultimate and Guts Championships in Vancouver, this worked really well



as there were much clearer winners than ever before. Using subjective feedback, we found that the SOTG winners were indeed seen as the best spirited teams.

An additional advantage of the new system is that teams receive scores in several areas. A team with low Spirit scores in a certain category (e.g. body contact or emotional management) can be approached by the TD while the tournament is ongoing. With that information in hand, it is easier to help teams improve their spirit even during a tournament.

Maybe the new SOTG scoring system is not yet perfect. However we believe it is a very good foundation to build on. We hope that everyone will send us comments and in the next two years the WFDF SOTG committee will take all feedback and reevaluate the system.

One of the most amazing things about Ultimate is that we can play hard but still play fairly. Without SOTG, Ultimate will not be the same. It is therefore essential that we work hard to maintain and improve SOTG wherever we can.

*Rue Veitl (Chairperson WFDF Ultimate Events Committee)*  
*Patrick van der Valk (Chairperson WFDF Spirit of the Game Committee)*

**Nationals (London).** Fire 2. Neil Haige, a hippy type, no doubt attracted to Ultimate by the peace and love ethos.  
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**Tour 2 (Cardiff).** Clapham Vs Fusion East. Adam Holt gets it right.  
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# indoor nationals

**March 2008 saw something new happen. Club Open and Women's Indoor Nationals were held on the same weekend in the same location. Sheffield played host to 28 teams from around the country bidding for the right to call themselves National Champions.**

Over 60 teams took part in qualifying with the Open division being over-subscribed and two Women's qualifiers being held for the first time. Another first was that the Manchester qualifier was played on next generation rubber-crumb pitches, which went down very well indeed. Nationals weekend itself was a brilliant success.

Pool play on Saturday took part at two different venues with the ladies competing at the often used Concord Sports Centre whilst the gents battled it out at the very impressive Ponds Forge International. In the absence

of Jemima Codhand, it was Shimmy that started top seeds and they soon proved their worth, winning all of their games. Steal Ladies finished second in their pool after a tight 5-4 loss to the girls from Bristol and the other pool was decided in similar fashion with Discuits edging out The Brown with the same score.

Over in the men's event, Mexican Horse Bandits were, once again, the team to beat with Fully Charged, Disconduct and Cowboys seemingly the most likely to challenge them. The surprise package, however, turned out to be Air Badgers who, having been offered a place at late notice, went on to finish runner-up in their pool, only losing out to the favourites. The second pool went pretty much to seed, with Mustard the only team to move significantly, unable to continue their impressive form from qualifying.

Sunday's matches were all played on the large pitches at Ponds Forge and there were few surprises as the quarter-finals got under way. All the Open quarters went to seed with MHB, Cowboys and Fully Charged looking in fine form. The semi-final round produced close games throughout the order but the top seeds found themselves making their way into the final. In the Women's event, Shimmy and Steal progressed easily to their semis with the only upset coming in the 2v7 game as Curve overcame Discuits 4-2 for a shot at reaching the final. Sadly for the Clissold girls, they came up against a fiery Steal team in the semis and ended up on the receiving end of a 10-3 battering. The other semi was equally one-sided with Shimmy beating The Brown 8-2.

The finals provided great competition and excitement with Shimmy needing to battle the home crowd and injuries,

as well as their opponents, to win the Women's event. Sadly, Steal Ladies couldn't find the same form which saw them cruise to the final and made too many errors against very clinical opponents. Fully Charged would have to work very hard to beat reigning champions MHB and it turned out they just didn't have enough on the day, finding themselves on the wrong end of a 11-7 score line. So, many congratulations to Shimmy and Mexican Horse Bandits for winning the UKUA National Indoor Finals 2008! The spirit prizes went to Birds Aye and Air Badgers, the latter whom were also my team of the weekend. The Badgers finished 4th in the end, on a weekend where they also had an amazing 4 teams competing in the U17s event in Malpas.

The staff at Ponds Forge were amazing. I've never hosted an event before where I was given three people to abuse all weekend! They also arranged in-venue advertising and media releases which led to a small spot on BBC Radio Sheffield. Local advertising can work, it seems, as we had a junior team from Matlock turn up to watch. They were even fortunate enough to be able to play a game against Hulltimate in the finals round, much to the enjoyment of everyone present. Thanks also to Lookfly for supporting the event.

I hope the indoor scene continues to grow as there's certainly no reason why indoors shouldn't be as popular and competitive as outdoors. After all, who wants to be playing in the mud in March?!

*Si East*

**Mixed Tour 3 (Brighton).** Cardif Ultimate.  
Chris 'Mop' Griggs-Trevarthen.  
© Graham Bailey 2008  
grahambaileyphotography.com



# juniors

**It's been another great year for Junior Ultimate, both internationally - where once again GB sent 6 national junior squads to compete at the highest level (Junior Open and Women's teams to Vancouver for the World Championships, two Open U17s and two Girls U17s teams to Slovakia for Europeans) - and domestically. The growth at national junior tournaments has been immense and we will almost certainly face regionalisation next year in order to accommodate so many participants.**

The first tournament of the year was the U17s indoors where 13 teams competed in Malpas, Cheshire. Airbadgers, having lost their crown to Ocelots in 2007, were re-crowned champions beating Arctic in the final. Significantly, Airbadgers had 3 teams finish in the top 8 and Arctic 2 teams showing the strength in depth these schools now have.

The junior indoors took place in the not so central location of Plymouth, but that didn't hinder 23 teams from competing for the national title. The top two seeds of Ocelots (Malpas, Cheshire) and Airbadgers (Exeter) duly dispatched all rivals to set up a closely fought final. Many of these juniors have been playing against and along side each other for GB U17s and GB Juniors since 2005. Ocelots managed to edge the final giving Joshie (Chevron and ex-Mowers) his 5th national junior title.

The Junior outdoors took place once again in Sutton Coldfield, just outside Birmingham. More rain and high winds as we have become accustomed to in July, but this time 27 teams, 10 more than in 2007, competed for the title that Mowers had held for the previous 3 years. A gruelling schedule definitely favoured the larger squads, with the top 8 seeds all progressing to the quarter finals. Strong winds on the Sunday straight down the pitches

made some matches more of a lottery on winning the toss, but most teams demonstrated great disc skills and still managed to score upwind points. Brighton, having beaten Ocelots and Kent, both in sudden death, came up against hosts Arctic. An early upwind score was quickly cancelled out and Arctic edged a sudden death win to become worthy champions, having been runners up last year.

A couple of junior tournaments that took place late in 2007 should also receive a mention. The junior women's indoors once again took place in Malpas with 6 teams competing. Thundercatch from Gosport edged Catch Those from the Wirral (2006 champions) in the final. In December, 16 teams competed in a one day junior tournament in Nottingham which we hope will also become an annual event.

As the junior scene continues to develop, many more young players are now also representing A Tour Open teams which benefits their own development. It's great to see so many Open teams encouraging these players. Chevron, Devon, Vision, Brighton, EMU, Janitors, etc. all have significant numbers of juniors training and playing with them. So, a big thank you to everyone that has helped encourage junior ultimate in this country. And, since we're not very good at saying thank you publicly, huge thanks and gratitude to everyone that helped coach or manage one of the GB junior squads in this, or in previous years.

*Kevin Lowe UKUA Junior Coordinator*

**EUCF (Paris).**

Fire Vs Flying Angels. Nick Wong.

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# it's a mixed scene



## From Social Club To Serious Competitors - A Brief History Of The Thundering Herd.

For those of you that don't know us, the Thundering Herd are a dedicated mixed team based in London and overall winners of Mixed Tour 2008. However it wasn't always this way...

Like many teams, we started playing for purely social reasons. Mainly because after a bit of a run around we felt less guilty getting drunk in the pub! In fact we started as a works team and, with the exception of a few GB legends, the original team was comprised of complete beginners. We didn't even know what a drill was, never mind run one, until well over 6 months into our existence. To begin with we were a small squad and often only got 4 or 5 at practice. Despite this, and losing our first 14 winter league games in a row, we held in there, kept playing rain or shine and slowly but surely our numbers increased and our performances improved.

Whilst in the first few years our numbers grew slightly, the real improvement in our game came from the fact that the same bunch of 10 or so core players had been playing and developing together since day one. That closeness not only gave us the edge over some teams who had better individual players but it also allowed us to maintain the fun and social aspect of the club that had inspired us to start playing in the first place. I can still remember the debate as to whether we should enter Tour as it all seemed very serious, a little scary and not really in-line with what we were about. Frisbee was just an excuse to have a laugh and throw a disc with our mates.

However like many teams who develop in a similar way we started to struggle as the inevitable happened and some of the core players began to leave. At

this point we realised that we needed to work hard and actively recruit to keep the club going. It wasn't easy but through plenty of hard work, open practices, beginner sessions and regular begging messages to various mailing lists our numbers began to swell.

By making ourselves open to new players and by improving year on year we not only kept adding depth to the squad (we now have 65 registered and fully paid up members) but we also started to attract players of a higher standard. This helped the team improve which in turn allowed us to recruit even better players. Turns out it's true when they say 'success breeds success'.

As the squad developed the challenges facing it began to change. To begin with we were concerned with the fact that no one on the team could throw a sidearm and what the hell was this zone thing that everyone kept talking about? But soon we found ourselves struggling with how to manage the massive amount of administration involved with running such a big club, how many players to take in each squad and how to maintain the all important feeling of closeness and fun.

Due to the size of the club we had a re-think and decided we needed to make the management of the club more structured. This involved significantly expanding the number of roles from just captains and coach to include what we now consider vital positions such as president, treasurer, social security and director of Merchandise. Luckily for us there were an abundance of capable and highly motivated individuals willing to take up these roles and, whilst not without hiccups, the team continued to grow and continued to improve.

One such hiccup was that towards

the end of the 2007 season when both of the long running captains had to leave the club due to personal circumstances. At the same time I (the coach) came to the conclusion that I wasn't the best person to take the club to the next level (we finished 6th in mixed tour 2007).

For many smaller clubs this may have spelled disaster however, due to the strength of the management team and the love of the Herd which resided in all of us, the team continued. New captains were brought up from the ranks and Fergus (who had just started playing with us) was brought in as the new coach.

Over the next 12 months things did change somewhat. Practice became a more serious affair and players were encouraged to do a lot more fitness work. However these changes worked and ultimately allowed the club to fulfil its goal of winning Mixed Tour. And the best bit, I'm very glad to say, is that we've managed to maintain the same play hard, party harder attitude and the closeness of the players within the club has never been stronger.

So whilst I no longer run training, do any of the admin or get to talk motivational dribble during game time, I've never been prouder of the team or every player on it.

Thanks  
*Kenee, Ex-Coach. Thundering Herd*

**Mixed Tour 3 (Brighton).** Alex 'Stylish' Dunnett. © *Graham Bailey 2008*  
[grahambaileyphotography.com](http://grahambaileyphotography.com)

**Mixed Tour 3 (Birmingham).** Emu Vs Chundering Bird, Dave Povey. © *Graham Bailey 2008*  
[grahambaileyphotography.com](http://grahambaileyphotography.com)

**Nationals (London).** Nott Shore. © *Jason Squire 2008* [mysportstream.com](http://mysportstream.com)





# women's bits



## Crown Jewels: The creation of a new women's team.

Like many great Ultimate teams of the past, and many more to come, the impetus for Crown Jewels arose over a few drinks at the pub. With so many women playing Ultimate in London it seemed to be the right time to consider starting a new club. It seems we weren't the only ones thinking this and as a result the 2008 UK Women's Tour saw 3 brand spanking new London based teams: Iso, Dirty Olives and Crown Jewels.

Crown Jewels is the unification of female ultimate players from various London mixed teams and is truly international, with representatives from both North and South America, Europe and the Antipodes. We started early in 2008, initially as a bunch of ABH women, but quickly expanded to include others from a number of mixed teams across London who were eager to be part of a women's team that played and trained regularly together, at a competitive and fun level. Once the decision was made to take the plunge and start another London women's team, emails were sent and before we knew it we were entering Tour 0 with a full squad.

Our first committee meeting involved

lots of eager faces keen to be part of the excitement that was to follow. We quickly agreed on our goal of creating an atmosphere of dedicated training in an environment filled with familiar and friendly faces. The hardest part was coming up with a name. We trawled through a number of amusing (and terrible!) names and then someone (thank you, Leah Haines!) suggested 'Crown Jewels' and while completely ignoring the clear innuendo we unanimously agreed that this was the name for us! Think Tower of London, the queen and a bit of sparkle.

We have had a great turnout throughout the season at training, fitness, Tour and of course socials! We had a fantastic first Tour season, surpassing our expectations by finishing 7th at the end of Tours 1, 2 and 3 and 10th overall. We have also taken home not 1 but 2 spirit awards of which we are very proud.

None of this would have been possible without solid teamwork and unrelenting enthusiasm by all involved, both on and off the pitch. We've worked hard to take the team forward and are excited about the future of Crown Jewels. We welcome

any new ladies with open arms. You can contact us by emailing the committee on [blingblingcaptains@gmail.com](mailto:blingblingcaptains@gmail.com) or by joining the [crownjewelsultimate](#) yahoo group.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank all the women who participated in Women's Tour in 2008 and those involved in its organisation. Women's Tour adds a further dimension to Ultimate that is both competitive and hugely enjoyable and hopefully, with everyone's continued contribution; we can continue to grow Women's Ultimate in the UK.

Danielle Wood



**Tour 2 (Cardiff).** Alize 'Bob' Clough, Brighton.  
© Dave Sanders 2008 [ultimatephotos.org](#)

**Tour 3 (Mansfield).** The Crown Jewels.

**Nationals (London).** Iceni Vs LLLadies.  
Anna Wilks arrives for the sandwich action .  
© Dave Sanders 2008 [ultimatephotos.org](#)

**Nationals (London).** Iceni Vs LLLadies. Sophie Watson looks to huck deep but there's a handler in the way.  
© Jason Squire 2008 [mysportstream.com](#)

**Tour 2 (Cardiff).** Iceni Vs Nice Bristol, The legend that is Anja Haman.  
© Graham Bailey 2008





# a kestrel for a knave

## chevron's quest for tour success



A dramatic end to the 2008 UKUA Tour season saw Fusion take home their first Tour win and, not without a little bit of luck, saw Chevron collect the Ben Rainbow trophy as winners of the overall title for the first time in twelve attempts.

The Ben Rainbow trophy was commissioned and donated to the UKUA 11 years ago by Chevron on behalf of Ben's family, following his tragically early death, aged 24, from a rare liver cancer. Ben was a founder member of Fingers 6, the forerunner to Chevron Action Flash, and was the reason many of those who have played for Chevron over the years played Ultimate at all. As Rob Mitchell said when accepting the trophy this year, Chevron and its alumni stand on his shoulders and we are so proud to have our club's name on his trophy. For the three original Chevron players still with the team, getting their hands on Ben's trophy has arguably been the motivation that has kept them in the game.

So how did it happen this year? What changed that meant we had the Tour in our own hands (despite needing a little help from Fusion in the end) by the time Tour 3 came around? Well, put simply, lots of things changed. We could talk about training and tactics

and the team spirit within the club but one of the biggest influencing factors has been the rise of the Chevron juniors.

Chevron has had ties with junior teams for some time through Chevron Alumnus Kev Lowe as GB Junior co-ordinator and coach. His hard work getting juniors interested in Ultimate and then turning them into potential stars has had a huge impact on the club. Stourbridge has long been a hotbed of talent for Chevron from the likes of Chevron regulars Si (Sid) Dathan, a GB Open reserve this year, and 2008 GB Open debutant Daniel (Dyno) Friedeberg to newbies such as Matt (Evil) Dathan, Owain Boardman and 2008 GB Mixed player Giacomo (Giant Comb Over) Maltman. In 2003 Kev started coaching Ultimate with a Woodcraft Youth group in Birkenhead in the Wirral from which spawned the Mowers junior team and brought us players like GB Junior captain Josh Walkden Smith, GB Open reserve James (Jacko) Jackson and GB Junior coach Mark Penny. The combination of these two teams means the pool of players is growing in size and skill level.

But it is in no way a one way street. We don't siphon off the best players and



cut the rest loose. We hold monthly training sessions through the winter where all the juniors from Stourbridge and Birkenhead who wish to try out for the club can come along. We focus on giving these players the experience of playing Open ultimate and developing their basic skills and tactics. If they don't make the cuts, they still continue to attend for the rest of the season as they are part of the wider club and they can continue to benefit from the experience. There has been success for both clubs and individuals who have attended these sessions with, for example, the Mowers team winning Junior Outdoor Nationals 3 years in a row between 2005 and 2007.

The biggest breakthrough for the current crop was EUCE in Basel last year. A 16 man team with an average age of 22, many having just finished their first season in the A tour, took 8th in Europe. Winning some big games and always putting up a fight resulted in several sudden-death games against the best in Europe. All the players there stepped up and after a year on Tour and a successful Euros these relatively inexperienced players became a vital part of the squad.

Sure, we've also picked up a few stars this year as well, but no member of the

squad has ever won the tour before and all of us are pushed to work harder, improve, train more and develop our game further by the presence of the juniors. They bring exuberance, enthusiasm and a desire to win. The GB Junior team showed this desire by finishing 4th at WUGC this year and there were 28 teams at Junior Outdoor Nationals in 2008. Juniors in the UK is at an all time high and we're proud of our junior representatives both past and present and will continue to focus on developing the talent of future GB players.

### The Chevron Squad

**Tour 3 (Mansfield).** Do you think they might be calling a timeout? Fusion winning a tour with twelve guys... Chevron players cheered the time out call, and were seen bringing water to the Fusion circle.

© Kate Orwin 2008 ultimatephotos.org

### Nationals (London).

Chevron Vs. Fusion West.

© Jason Squire 2008 mysportstream.com

**Tour 3 (Mansfield).** Chevron Vs. Clapham. Matt Beavan gets the 'D'.

© Dave Sanders 2008 ultimatephotos.org

### Nationals (London).

Giacomo Maltman warms up for the final.

© Jason Squire 2008 mysportstream.com



### Top 16 compared to 2007

Chevron Action Flash	↑ 1
Fire of London 1	↓ 1
Clapham Ultimate 1	↓ 2
Fusion East	=
Brighton Ultimate 1	↑ 4
GB Masters	New Entry
EMO 1	↑ 8
Clapham Ultimate 2	↓ 1
LeedsLeedsLeeds	↓ 4
Discuits 1	↓ 4
Devon Ultimate 1	↑ 8
Bristol Plastic Factory 1	↑ 1
Ltd Release 1	↑ 1
Fusion West	New Entry
Mild Mannered Janitors	↓ 5
Sheffield Steal 1	↑ 8





# the golden girls

## world championship triumph for british ladies



WCBU. GB Vs. USA, Sue Pioli scores a point. © Shawn Robb

WCBU. GB Vs. USA, Lucy Byrne catches the final point to win gold.  
© José Pires 2008 joez.smugmug.com

Sally Quigg claims that this is her with a tan. © Joel Wong 2008 beachultimate.org

While much of the Ultimate focus over the past year has been on Vancouver, four GB teams were quietly preparing for the beach equivalent – the World Championships Beach Ultimate (WCBU) in Maceio, Brazil.

December 2008 was the second edition of the Championships which are organised every four years by BULA, the Beach Ultimate Lovers Association ([www.beachultimate.org](http://www.beachultimate.org)). Each is a highly spirited event with competitive games and an emphasis on fun, in line with BULA's mission to 'assist, educate and promote the spirit and game of Beach Ultimate worldwide'.

Many players are surprisingly dismissive of the beach game, which at a high level is a more tactical and strategic game than grass ultimate. Maybe this is due to the shortage of beach-weather in the UK and the need to travel, but there's a thriving beach scene beyond the crowds and capitalism of Paganello, where prices are low and spirited competition is high. The BULA website has a listings page.

The journey to Brazil for the GB Women's team began on a sunny June weekend in Dorset. Captains Lucy Byrne and Jo Drury used the Beachfest tournament to whittle the team down to 13 players. Although it was an open tournament, sand is a great leveller and the team got off to a flying start. We trounced several experienced open teams and won spirit – our Caipirinha cocktail call was a deciding factor and set the tone nicely for Brazil.

Months of hard work and commitment followed. Summer training sessions on chilly beaches in Western Super Mare gave way to a warmer indoor beach volleyball stadium once winter arrived. Running on sand is a little like...well, running on sand, and nerves grew about the temperatures we would face at the height of Brazilian summer.



After five days pottering around Brazil, surfing with dolphins, swimming with sea turtles and dancing in the streets, the GB women's team assembled in Maceio for the Championships. The Opening Ceremony was typical of the warmth, colour and music of Brazil. The excitement was contagious and competitors circled up on the beach in primary colours for a spontaneous carnival.

Disappointingly, the journey to Brazil proved too costly for many nations and the women's division was small with only five teams: Australia, Brazil, Courier Island, the USA and GB. Our schedule was a round robin, playing each team twice. In our first round, we racked up comfortable victories until we faced the Americans. This game was a tough fight and our first taste of strong opposition. We put in a lot of effort and went on to win.

Despite the shortage of competition we were well-challenged in our second round of games. The feisty Australian ladies improved massively to give us a strong battle, and the Brazilian women used their greater experience on sand to worrying effect, flying over the sand apparently unaware of the heat.

We notched up a second round of victories and faced our last game of the round robin against the US women. It was a tough game mentally and physically. The Americans pulled

ahead of us and an epic 12-minute point mid game wasted valuable time. At the end of the cap Sue Pioli skied two US players to score. Despite this leaving us four-points down, it was a crucial point as it put us top of the pool and meant the US would have to play a semi-final against the much improved Australian women.

The US won the semi, but barely, and the women's gold came down to a battle between GB and the USA.

We began Final Day by flying the flag for the GB Masters who had the first game of the day, also against the Americans. The sight of our Union Jacks spurred the boys on to a three-point run. Sadly, though, our tattooed Bristols proved just as much of an incentive for the USA Masters who went on to win 15-12.

Our final was at 1pm with the sun at its highest. In our pre-game talk we determined to continue playing with as much spirit as we had during the rest of the tournament and knew that by using the full breadth of the team we could take the game. The US women were on formidable form and we had to fight for every point. We traded all the way to the cap. Not realising we were playing the final point, Sue Pioli launched a heart-stopping pitch-length sidearm roll-curve which Lucy Byrne scored with a backwards lay-out to win us the game – the first GOLD for any GB team in a World Championships ever!

The celebrations were worthy of our location and ended in the wee small hours with a game of strip ultimate on the beach – unfortunately this was one game we didn't win. We went to bed with huge smiles on our faces and the remains of Union Jack tattoos on our Bristols – both stayed with us for a long time afterwards.



With great captaincy, competitive games and supportive, spirited teammates, it was without doubt the most enjoyable playing experience of my life.

To get involved in beach ultimate take a look at [www.beachultimate.org/blog](http://www.beachultimate.org/blog). For information on previous WCBU's visit [www.wcbu2004.org](http://www.wcbu2004.org) and [www.wcbu2007.org](http://www.wcbu2007.org).

### A Taste of Brazil:

The Caipirinha is the national drink of Brazil made with cachaça, a Brazilian style of rum made from sugarcane. If you have difficulty finding it, you can replace cachaça with white rum or vodka, but should use decent quality because it's pretty much neat alcohol.

### Ingredients:

- 1 lime, quartered
- 2 tsp brown sugar
- 2 oz cachaça
- Crushed ice

### Preparation:

- Place the lime wedges and sugar into an old-fashioned glass.
- Muddle well to create a paste.
- Fill the glass with crushed ice.
- Pour in the cachaça.
- Stir well.

Sally Quigg





# coaching tips:

## cross-training for ultimate

**Most Ultimate players that I know play other sports too, so I thought I'd write this year about how best to combine activities for maximum cross-training benefit. It's good to have a bit of variety in your sporting life, but – being the focused, goal-oriented types that we are – why not get the most crossover benefit for your main sport (Ultimate, of course) out of your 'alternative' activities?**

One of the things I love about Ultimate is the great range of physical and mental abilities that are required to play it well. A long (but by no means exhaustive) list might include: Focus, concentration, acceleration, speed, agility, change of direction, reactions, timing, teamwork, pitch awareness, judgement, throwing/catching skills, jumping, power, explosiveness, stamina, leadership.

Now as we well know, there's no other sport out there that requires quite such a range of skills, so what I've done below is highlight some of the key aspects of other sports, and also the areas they don't cover. One way you could approach cross-training is to do a spot of self-analysis; figure out which of the abilities I've listed above are your weakest areas, and tailor your activities to help you improve in the right places.

**Running:** the simplest, and in some ways, the best approach to cross-training: it's easy to do, directly applicable to Ultimate, and you don't need a bunch of team-mates to get started. However, the devil is in the detail – straight-line running at a steady pace will train your legs and lungs to become more efficient at exactly that pace, at the expense of the fast-twitch muscle fibres that allow you to accelerate and change direction rapidly. So for Ultimate purposes, aim for a mixture of cross-country (hills for leg strength, uneven surfaces train better ankle stability), fartlek (different speeds train different

energy systems), change-of-direction work (much harder than fixed pace!), and track work (sprint sessions for acceleration and flat-out speed).  
*Good for: fitness, convenience.*  
*Bad for: teamwork, skills.*

**Hillwalking/trekking:** in my experience, a great way of developing the kind of stamina needed for multiple-day tournaments, and the mental/physical resilience required to cope with a heavy training and playing load during the season. Little direct fitness benefit (apart from some leg strengthening).  
*Good for: stamina, teamwork.*  
*Bad for: skills, explosiveness.*

**Cycling:** there are many good things about cycling – getting around cities without trashing the environment, most efficient form of transport et cetera. But I have to say that from my perspective it's actually one of the least effective forms of cross-training for Ultimate, for a number of physiological reasons. Cycling tends to exacerbate an already-common problem: the over-dominance of quads at the expense of hamstrings/glutes, which can lead to a whole host of injury problems. If you do cycle, use toeclips for a better distribution of work across the leg muscles, ensure you strengthen your hamstrings/glutes (deadlifts, glute/ham raises), and loosen up your ITB regularly with self-myofascial release (confused? Google it!).  
*Good for: the environment!*  
*Bad for: hamstring health.*

**Rowing:** people who know me will be aware that I have long advocated the use of rowing machines for fitness work because a) they're low impact on the joints b) they're high impact on the muscles (and a damn high proportion of them too!) and c) they're very versatile in training terms. Of course, the basic movement is not running-based, so the translation to Ultimate

is indirect, but for the (ahem!) older player, the ability to train hard without banging your body up is invaluable.  
*Good for: fitness, joints.*  
*Bad for: teamwork, skills.*

**Football:** not my favourite participatory sport personally (being right-footed and having a dodgily unstable right knee), but it's certainly a good match fitness-wise for Ultimate training. Obviously there's less subbing on and off, putting a greater emphasis on stamina rather than pure speed (at the levels that most of us are likely to be playing at, anyway!). Winter five-a-side leagues would be my preference compared to the mudbaths of the full-size Sunday league scene.  
*Good for: fitness, teamwork, awareness.* *Bad for: injury risk.*

**Rugby/touch rugby:** much though I love 15-a-side rugby union, I'd be hard pushed to recommend it to Ultimate players for its cross-training benefits! The occasional run-out in the backs could work well, but I don't think too many prop-forwards have successfully made the transition to Ultimate (anyone know different?). Touch rugby, however, is a great way of developing the kind of heads-up awareness and passing ability that would really benefit any handler.  
*Good for: acceleration, awareness, reactions.* *Bad for: not much.*

**Netball/basketball:** as with the other team sports mentioned above, there's much to like here in cross-training terms; it's no secret that those with a background in either of these sports tend to make excellent Ultimate players. In fact, the similarities are such that there's a danger of inappropriate transfer of skill acquisition – catching a disc and then instinctively setting off on a dribble (just after basketball season) doesn't tend to work too well!  
*Good for: skills, teamwork, fitness.*  
*Bad for: nothing.*

**Badminton/Tennis/Squash:** again, lots to like here; similar work/rest ratios, lots of changing direction and quick movements, and a good workout for your throwing arm. Also some good teamwork aspects if you play doubles – though I have to say, doubles squash just confuses the \*@\$\$\* out of me!  
*Good for: change of direction, agility, reactions.*  
*Bad for: straight-line speed, jumping.*

**Boxing/martial arts:** one of the best point-blockers I've ever known was also a black belt in karate: coincidence? I don't think so. All martial arts emphasise speed and reactions, and boxers are some of the fittest athletes out there. Good flexibility and core stability benefits too, without the stigma of having to attend a pilates class.  
*Good for: power, reactions, flexibity.*  
*Bad for: teamwork, skills, disputing foul calls.*

**Yoga/Pilates:** Ok, so they aren't really sports per se, but in terms of training benefit they're definitely worth considering (despite my little dig above).  
*Good for: flexibility, core stability, injury resistance.*  
*Bad for: everything else!*

Right, that's a pretty wide selection to be going on with. A great way to cover all your training needs is to pick a pair of sports whose demands complement each other. A few good combinations: cross-country running and basketball; rowing and touch rugby; football and pilates; badminton and boxing. Variety is the spice of your training life: by incorporating cross-training into your winter schedule you'll start next season's Ultimate mentally refreshed and physically fit, and you'll have had fun doing it too!

Jeff Jackson.

# "you can't teach tall"



**That's what they say.**  
But that doesn't stop little Caesar (#9) from trying...

Lesson 1 "The Three R's"  
Reading, Running and catching the Ruddy disc.  
Notice how he times his jump perfectly.



Tour 2 (Cardiff). Chevron Vs. Fire. Will 'Caesar' Cornelius.  
© Graham Bailey 2008 grahambaileyphotography.com





# delivering the world



## Running the World Ultimate Championships

After two years of planning and organizing it seems like the 2008 Worlds Ultimate and Guts Championships came and went very quickly. Eight days of competition between teams from 20 nations playing over 350 games. When the dust settled I was asked by countless people what I thought of the event. My answer came down to this – “We met our expectations”. And considering how high they were I would say that WUGC 2008 was an unqualified success!

We had expectations in many areas. Of course, any major event run in Vancouver must hold up to 1997, which was seen by some as a turning point in terms of the level of organization of World events. No longer could Worlds simply be an “Ultimate Tournament”, it had to move upwards to be called a “Full Service Event”. We managed to raise the bar at World Clubs, so what did we want to accomplish in 2008?

Aside from the obvious goals of providing participants with a world class event, something that I believe we did, I was personally hoping that history would look at WUGC 2008 in Vancouver and see it as a turning point in terms of the on-field competition. In 1998 Canada managed to break through at WUGC and change Worlds from an event dominated by the USA into one with two countries sitting at the top. I think that 2008 will be seen as the start of the time when the top of our sport started to become much more crowded.

Certainly the results from the Japanese teams point in that direction. I’m sure the Buzz Bullets are disappointed with their results in the Open division, having Gold on their minds for the better part of two years, but it was no fluke that the Women’s team was in the final. And with the Jr. Women from that country taking Gold and the Mixed team getting into the final and winning Silver it’s clear that Ultimate will now have a three horse race for the top prize from here on out.

The USA, Canada and Japan should not just look at each other however: the results are pointing to a time when no country can count on just showing up and picking up some hardware. The UK for one is focused on joining the medal hunt. The Women’s team had a pre-tournament tour of North America, serving notice that they were looking to improve, but a heartbreak loss in the Quarters prevented a chance at a medal. The dedication to improving was clear, and this squad no doubt will be one of the ones to beat at WUCC 2010 in Prague. The Open team also missed the medals, but did accomplish the break-through they were looking for when the tournament started by making it into the Semi Finals, only to run into the previous World Champions and eventual Gold Medalists, and then a very tough Japanese team in the Bronze Medal game. Fourth likely felt like a bit of a letdown after being so close, but I’m sure it felt better than the 8th place finish they posted in 2004, and the overall team results from the UK secured a spot for the

country at the 2009 World Games. If the significant strides that both the Open and Women’s teams have made in the past two years is any indication, then a medal at that event is not out of the question.

Finally, there was the somewhat surprise showing of the Colombian teams. Out of seemingly nowhere (except for a Bronze Medal from the 2006 World Junior Championships) this “new” Ultimate country showed up in Vancouver with 5 teams (Open, Women, Mixed, Jr. Open, Jr. Women) and shocked many opponents with their speed and skill. Only a couple of very tough losses for the Jr. Women kept my prediction of a medal for a Colombian team from coming true, and with so much strength in their Junior Programs and a lot of enthusiasm for the sport it will be a surprise indeed if they don’t start to challenge for podium positions from here on out.

Not only are we seeing more teams fighting for medals at the top, but there are an ever increasing number of countries who are developing the sport and will be looking to participate in the future. In 2012 we could see teams from Morocco, Israel, India, Pakistan, Indonesia, Philippines, Korea, Brazil and China joining those 20-25 countries who regularly attend WUGC. Regional events in South America and South East Asia and increased participation in The European Club Series, as well as Ultimate’s continued and growing participation at the World Games points us towards a very bright future for the sport. I can’t wait to see where we are going, and on behalf of the Staff and Volunteers at WUGC 2008, we are very proud to have played a small part in the exciting history of Ultimate.

*Brian Gisell  
TD, WFDF 2008 World Ultimate and Guts Championships*

**Worlds (Vancouver) Final Ceremony.** Yes, the Irish won Spirit.

**Men’s Division Final.** Canada Vs USA. OK, so you’re playing in the final of the World Championships. You’d think you might have got as far as 1.1 in the rule book. [1.1. Ultimate is a non-contact sport.]

Actually, the 2008 Open Final was a very good game to watch – in comparison with the 2004 Open final, where there were about seventy foul calls, this year there were only half a dozen, and instead seeing who could shout loudest, the players seemed to just turn the decision over to the unbiased crowd, who always gave the advantage to Canada.

*Photos © Dave Sanders 2008 ultimatephotos.org*





# girls

Arriving in stunning Vancouver, still excited although exhausted from the flight, it's safe to say I was as ready as I ever would be for Worlds. The training, both as a team, locally and individually had, we hoped, prepared us for the journey we were about to embark on.

Apart from the beautiful scenery around Vancouver, one of the most memorable sights I saw was when we were heading onto the main pitches at UBC for a spot of training the day before our first game and we were faced with around 15 different countries training on the same field. I was totally stunned and our Coach, James Hall, had to let us free for half an hour to take it all in before we'd have any hope of a decent bit of training!

Seeing all the competitors at the opening ceremony really hit home for us all just how large this tournament was, but it seemed to lessen our nerves and boost our excitement into overload. The buzz of thousands of people ready to show the world what they're made of pulsated though us all and I really felt the spirit the world of Ultimate is built on.

The first game is always nerve wracking, but when we stepped out against the USA we were prepared for a fight with the passion GB bring out even when faced with a serious challenge. The knowledge that I was playing against the top seed was totally elating and even with a few disappointing results during the course of the tournament the highs took our team on a real emotional roller coaster.

One of the most emotionally challenging parts of our trip was when one of our players injured her ACL and had to be taken off in an ambulance from the field in the middle of our game against Columbia, but with her out of the game it really gave us a reason to



fight even harder and I've never seen as much passion and desperation on a pitch as I did that game. With Jaz back to us on crutches we got back to being our old selves and rocked our way through our penultimate game; a tough one against Finland. Sudden death at the end of a game, after the Finnish had beaten us twice before, brought out the best in a lot of our players and we took the last point, finishing 6th overall in the Junior Women's division.

One of the things I really love about Ultimate is the friends I've made through it, on a local, national and international scale and with the internet to help I don't think I'll ever lose contact with the people I've met from all over the world.

Seeing the standard of teams such as the Canadians, Americans, Australians and of course our Great British squads

has really raised the bar to a lot of us, showing us just how good we could be, and the level at which we could one day play. Supporting the GB Women and Mixed squads especially showed us as Junior Women what we have to aspire to and where we could aim to find ourselves in the future.

I think I speak on behalf of my team in saying that playing at the World Championships was one of the most exciting, exhilarating, and memorable experiences of my life, exceeding all expectations, and I'd like to thank everyone who helped make it happen.

Kate Farmer

Worlds (Vancouver).

Flags at the opening ceremony.

© Dave Sanders 2008 ultimategames.org

Worlds (Vancouver). Time to party.

© Ruth Crawford 2008



# boys

Much as this may sound like a very "serious" article for a casual rag such as Ultimatum (Editor's Note: I beg your pardon?), I think if you ask any of the GB Juniors how they felt after crashing out of the medals against Germany, I'm sure they'll tell you they felt pretty damned serious.

"Ultimate is all about stories, boys" (Dale Walker - Head Coach) and this is ours...

The results spoke for themselves: We did above and beyond what we and the coaches thought we could achieve, and still felt a little gutted to come away empty handed.

Over the course of the season our confidence as a team had grown exponentially, and we really needed it! Almost anyone who you mentioned the GB Juniors to gave the same old script, "where are your Jackos? Your Giacomos and your superstars from Boston?" This was a young team chucked straight in at the deep end and finding a sense of team spirit would be vital. Winning the B-Tour was the first step.

Next came the serious coaching. Trainings would be tough on everyone and there were often more lows than highs if we're totally honest. We all remember the Birmingham training, we all remember the Brighton thrashing. Yet the way in which we dealt with these events would ultimately be the key to our success at worlds.

We bonded when we needed to the most, there were no strangers on this team all the way to our last game in Vancouver. When we went out on to the pitch, from the moment we began warming up each person knew that they would give it their all not just for the coaches but because they knew that their team-mates were doing exactly the same for them.

It sounds cheesy to say it but it was true. The first game against U.S.A was a complete culture shock. Everyone had to step up their game against these seemingly invincible, highly physical opponents. Although we ended up getting trashed by them, I remember we led at one stage and were the team that put the most points in against the Yanks!

From then on we felt like a team that could do some real damage at worlds...and I guess as many say, the rest is history!

George Wallis-Ryder

GB Juniors . Sam Green. The opponents were Japan who called him out. Their coach complemented my camera (Sony) but refused to take back the call which was a bit weak as most of his players thought Sam was in.

Tom Martin-Hall makes a bid against Canada. Photos © Kevin Lowe 2008





The GB Mixed squad, like the Open, implemented a two-year plan focusing on Worlds '08. The journey started in January '07, with over 150 people showing interest. The selection surprised some but made evident the approach for the two-year cycle: take the most athletic, nurture the skills and play direct.

Our aggressive style was designed to hit teams where it counted, scoring as quickly as possible and getting out on D. In so doing, competing for medals in Vancouver. By setting a high tempo, we prevented opponents from getting comfortable. This became the defining factor at Euros.

The final at Southampton in 2007 did not epitomize the quality of our play over the preceding five days, but I guess finals rarely do. The Czechs were well drilled and moved the disc effectively through their male handlers, their women working in the zone to provide scoring options. This was somewhat like our set-up and the final was close throughout. GB forced a few more errors through tight D and despite a Czech Callahan late on; the title was GB's. Special mention to 'the Federers' who not only graced the pitch with fine ultimate (Mark Fulford had zero turnovers for the week), but the sidelines with exquisite tailoring.

A few pregnancies, injuries and international retirements enforced some squad changes in 2008. The newbies soon stepped up making valuable contributions, on and off pitch, and posturing around in way too much GB stash. The team seized every opportunity to get game experience; making appearances at the Tour 0 mud party, Mixed Tour 3 and the Boston Invitational. All were invaluable for the team's development so thanks again to all the organisers and the teams.

At Worlds, the honour of the opening

game fell to the home team, Canada, and us. The game was exciting, both teams hungry for the disc, threatening everything on D and showing impressive skills and team work on O. The selection of athleticism was paying dividends: the Canadians were working hard for every score and toiling on D. Mark "Devin" Davin showed the way for the British men with 5 scores and 3 assists but it was the female contribution that kept it close, Ali Smith and Francesca Scarampi embarrassing their North American counterparts. However, the Canadians eked out an early lead, which sustained them to victory. GB came off the pitch buzzing.

Unfortunately, we never recaptured the feeling and the team performance was never matched. Despite early results going much as expected, too much effort to dispatch weaker teams found us lacking when it came to the big matches.

With Thac marshalling our zone Ds, we had wins over the Mexicans and Chinese Taipei (not Chinese Type-A). We eventually beat a strong French team, Rob Whitehouse the standout player from both sides. The Japanese were as expected: precise on O, crazy energetic zones for D, and clad head-to-toe in Lycra. They disrupted our long game and we never found our flow. We needed some of the magic from the opening game to give us a win, but alas, it did not happen.

Carrying two losses, the gold was looking more difficult as we entered the power-pool. Next the US and they dominated from the start not giving the disc up and applying pressure. Our O and D fought bravely, but were unable to wrestle control of the game. The game ended USA 17 – GB 9.

The less said about the Germany game the better... we lost the game in sudden death... Scheiße!



Due to a possible three-way-tie (GB, Aus & Ger), there was still a chance we could make the semis: beat Australia by 6 and rely on some complex statistics. The Australians knew this and they were sharp from the start. Our speed and tactics matched by theirs, half time came with the Aussies up by one. The margin we needed to win by was approaching an impossibility and the pressure showed. The Australians continued their good form and deservedly took a spot in the semis.

Our journey for a medal was over but in its place the challenge of securing 5th from Italy, Germany and France. GB did a good job of keeping cool under the French 'intensity' and ensured a place in the super charged 5th – 6th playoff, against Germany, to claim the top European slot.

Hannah Williams & Joe Graves

# making the grade

## a first time view of the world championships

**Hindsight is a wonderful thing. It makes you smarter than you are; it allows you to know what you didn't know, almost to see into the future. In hindsight would I have trained for 2 years only to come 5th in the world championships? Would I have run shuttles and sprints in the pouring rain on a Sunday, missing out on concerts, dinners and friends had I known that I wouldn't win a medal at Ultimate's most prestigious event of the last four years? Sadly the answer is yes.**

Since I returned from Worlds I have asked myself this question a lot. I came back from Worlds, beaten, bruised and broke, and yet I would still put myself through it again if given the chance. For me this was my first, and most likely my last, World Ultimate and Guts Championships. The WUGC is the holy grail of Ultimate tournaments. When I first started to play, only 2 people from my city had ever been to one: they were the ones who owned Gaia kit! So when the opportunity arose for me to try for the team I could only box out the competitors and pancake it with both hands.

I wanted to have my grandchildren on my knee and tell them that I represented Great Britain in a sport that they have never heard of, will never see on TV and will never earn any money playing. "We didn't do it for the fame, the money, the sex (well maybe the sex), we did it for the



glory, the kudos, and the choice was Ultimate or Korfbal, and we all know Korfbal is a dumb game."

WUGC was such a massive event for me that I was sure I would never make it there. I was certain that I would be hit by a bus, break my leg, have my plane hijacked or be cut from the team before I actually got to Vancouver. So I was in a total state of shock when I arrived in Canada, healthy, uninjured and ready to play. My last few days of training were achieved just by thinking about the fact I was here. My heart would race enough at the thought of playing to count as an aerobic workout.

GB Mixed had been asked to play the show game at the opening ceremony. We couldn't believe it: even those on our team who had played for 20 years hadn't played in a show game. When we actually walked out onto the pitch it was bizarre, the crowd quickly disappeared into a din of noise in the back ground and a standard, hard fought game ensued. From that point on WUGC became just another tournament. We played. We won - we got praised. We lost - we got bollocked. We came 5th. A bit like Tour really except for the great weather.

Perhaps it was the massive expectation or because the week long championships was less than 1% of the time spent in preparation, but the tournament itself seemed to fly by. I feel in hindsight like we barely played. Were we actually there? Or is this t-shirt with a random logo on it from some charity shop?

Now that we are back, and all I have to show for my time at worlds are a few scars, a short-lived uneven tan and the t-shirt, it feels like a dream. But certainly a dream I would actively choose to have again.

Anita Beck



Worlds (Vancouver) Mixed Division.

GB Vs. Canada. Andrew 'Twig' Duncan throws a toss pass.

© Dave Sanders 2008 ultimatephotos.org

Worlds (Vancouver). Rob Whitehouse pulls for GB Mixed.

© Dave Sanders 2008 ultimatephotos.org

GB Pitch-side.

© Ruth Crawford 2008



# women

Like, I'm sure, all of my team mates on the GB Women's team, I came back from Vancouver with a sense of disappointment. In Vancouver we fell short of achieving our tournament goal of making semis by a single point having lost 16-15 to Australia in a game we were leading 15-13. It seemed at that time, in the space of a few short minutes, we had thrown away the opportunity of achieving what we had worked so hard for together. However, having the opportunity to write this article, I am reassured that despite missing our supporting goals, we did actually go a long way to achieving the vision we created in winter 2006.

At the start of the two year campaign that encompassed EUC and ended with WUGC, the GB Women's leadership group set out a long term vision:

'This team, and future women's teams stemming from this one, will be consistently dominant on the international scene'

Our supporting goals during our two years in charge were to win EUC and make semis at WUGC. In 2007 we fell short of winning EUC by two points after a frustrating performance in the final despite having looked dominant throughout the 2007 season. The biggest lesson we learned was that we didn't perform well under pressure. We needed more practice as a team in pressure situations and if we wanted to beat the best, we needed to play the best more often.

We first looked locally to see what could be done. Despite the continued growth of the women's tour in the UK there were still few instances where women get to experience high pressure tight games. This led to the instigation of the European Elite Series (EES).

The EES was set up to provide regular



elite European competition in the women's division. This year five elite national teams participated and hopefully this tournament will prove to be the start of more regular elite club tournaments as top European teams look to push each other to higher levels of performance through close, high quality games.

We then looked internationally: results from recent international tournaments show that the best women's teams in the world come predominantly from North America and Japan. It is no surprise that the North American and Japanese teams have created their own opportunities to play each other since 2004. The Japanese clubs invite the top North American club team to play in a tournament held annually in Japan called the Dream Cup. Indeed the Japanese teams actually subsidise this team to come! Going the other way, Japanese club teams have made the journey to Seattle, USA for the last three years now to attend the Emerald City Classic, an invite-only elite tournament.

they provided our closest game of that tournament. With solid handling and great receivers, GB has a pretty patient offense that allows its downfield cutters to get open for big yardage gaining cuts. The number of women who routinely make huge bids and athletic plays on the disc for this team is impressive—one of the more athletic teams at the tournament from top to bottom, I would say. Although losing in quarterfinals with three chances at game point must be terribly disappointing, the team has made huge strides in its cohesion and overall skill level from four years ago, aided in part by the creation of a British elite women's league"

It's comments like these that make us feel we definitely made a big step on the way towards our original vision despite missing out on our supporting goals. It's now up to current club teams and future GB Women's teams to keep building on this.

#### What next?

We need to develop consistency at the top level. Teams like Fury and Riot and the top Canadian club teams play high intensity, close games against each other regularly so they know how to stay in tight games and close them out. If we seriously want to compete and beat teams like this we need to keep putting ourselves in these situations.

We hope both future GB national and current club teams will follow the lead we have taken in making the decision to go further afield to push the boundaries of our performance.

*Sally Fraser*

#### Worlds (Vancouver) Women's Division.

The management have a meeting about stuff. © Ruth Crawford 2008

Not to be out-done, the GB women's team flew to North America in June for two weekend tournaments: CAL-States in California and Flowerbowl held in Vancouver. Here we played the reigning UPA Champions and USA representatives at WUGC, Fury, UPA runners up Riot from Seattle and the Canadian National Team amongst other top West Coast teams. At both tournaments we reached the semi finals and had significant games against Fury, pushing them closer than any one else in a 10-13 loss and a 15-9 win over the Canadian team at Flowerbowl. This tour proved that we could compete with the top teams.

The hard work to develop new skills, set higher standards, and adopt a broader set of strategies had taken us to a new level. Despite not playing the USA at WUGC, we obviously made our mark as shown by these comments by Fury/USA captain Gwen Amblor:

"Fury was lucky enough to play GB at CalStates back in June on the team's North American tour, and



## evolving the game

**From our international experience we have noted the current strategic trends in women's ultimate at the top of the game. We now need this to filter down from our GB experience to club level ultimate so that the women's scene continues to evolve. For the first time we are truly competing at the world elite level, the competition at the top has gotten much tighter and next time round we want to be confident of closing out some of those big games in our favour.**

#### Key Skills needed to be a top team:

Throwing skills under pressure are key. There will always be some stronger throwers on a team but everyone needs to have the key skills: the break force, the away pass and some long options so every player can get out of any situation and open up the field. Adding in cross-field throwing skills across the team will really open up doors. Cutting against top defenders requires

variety. You need tactics and tricks like: the stutter step, faking several times, pitch awareness to anticipate the direction of the flow and get into a good receiving space and clear those spaces if you find yourself in what will be the next ideal receiving area; and ensure your team comes back under after striking instead hanging out deep and preventing other deep options.

**Offensive strategies:** Aggressive lateral pass to huck offense. A current favourite. Right now it seems that top women's teams are keen to play aggressive offensive strategies at the risk of making a few turnovers and the lateral pass to huck is a dominant feature of this style of play. The ideal strike sets off from near level with the thrower on the far side of the pitch as the lateral pass is being initiated, the huck should flatten out and sit up out in front of the receiver allowing them to run onto it at speed. If it doesn't come off, those teams that come out

on top simply get the disc back more with hard defense and try again.

**Defense** is a tool to take the lead or turn a game. Most teams play a mixture of man and zone defence. Top teams possess a variety of zone defences, which are effective against different styles of offence or prevent the opposition from getting settled by mixing up the defence styles. Elite level man defence is close and aggressive. Player match-ups are smart and rely on player style as well as speed, for example a defender with a big force makes it difficult to get a huck out, but mixing it up with a squirrely type mark means that key throwers feel unsettled and will consequently under perform. Zone to man transition is also popular and a turn over is often achieved as the opposition try to unsettle their offensive style.

Do your homework, learn what you can about a team's style and key players before a big game and devise

a game plan. During the game use the first half to learn about the opposition, what mark ups work well, what D they struggle with and what style of offence is working well for you on that day, in those conditions and against their defence. Home in on those things in the second half to edge away a lead.

Strategy is about having enough in the tool box to stay one step ahead of the opposition. Variety on D doesn't allow the offence to find their comfort zone and variety on offence means that you can deal with whatever they throw at you. Then the real skill comes in recognising it in time to react appropriately.

*Sally Fraser.*

**Women's Final. USA Vs. Japan.**  
© Dave Sanders 2008 [ultimatephotos.org](http://ultimatephotos.org)





Week-long tournaments are incredible experiences. They seem to stretch infinitely before you like an ocean of Ultimate, yet they glide by effortlessly. Before you've even had time to visit the merchandise tents with a fist full of dollars you're at the business end of the week, trying to knock other teams out of the competition while squeezing in half an hour to watch a friend's important quarter final against Australia. And that's what makes WUGC so special. It's the big one. Players come from their corner of the globe just to watch. The player you mark up against you may never mark again in your life, Worlds is the only chance you ever get to sky him, break his force, shut him down, burn him deep, whatever.

This is somewhat at odds with the successive months of preparation required for the event; freezing training sessions in Loughborough on a frozen 3G surface, running shuttles when you're not at the gym on what feels like every night of the week during the parts of the year when light fails before you're home from work. It's a wonder we play ultimate in this country at all.

Over time the days got longer and the imminence of what lay in wait became clearer and clearer. For the final days in July I was restless and jittery, and the taxi to the airport was a strange sort of hell, yet nothing compared to the days spent in Vancouver before the tournament started. With our team gathered in one place there were 54 eyes staring at the calendar and buzzing to play Colombia. The tension was evident from the way we threw ourselves into The Mountain Equipment Co-Op to take advantage of the final few days of economic dominance by the pound. And then it started. And very soon after we were all sitting in the stands watching the final, Japan Open collect a bronze medal and Canada a gold. In between those two moments in time GB Open played eleven games of ultimate, scored one-hundred and fifty-six goals, conceded one-hundred and twenty-seven, won six games, lost five and finished fourth. We went to Vancouver believing we could win the greatest prize in the sport and ended up three points shy of a medal.

The whole week's play rested on a pivotal encounter with the Aussies



in the quarter. Earlier in the week they had topped our initial pool by beating us 17-11. Ours was the fourth and final quarter that GB would play against Australia in all divisions and we needed the win to even up the score. The old hands ramped up the pressure on the young players, every mind in our team huddle casting back to the earlier loss and eager for revenge. Our defence scored the first point of the game and the team never looked back. It was not easy, but our entire team was playing at a level we hadn't been capable of previously in the week. Had we lost, the whole week would have been a disappointment.

The final two games flew past in what felt like no time. The Canadians employed the cunning techniques of dynamic offence, hungry defence

and a nine point scoring streak to win despite a late rally from GB. The Japanese squirmed past our lead to grab the last medal and end Worlds.

Clearly though, there's more to an event such as Worlds than the results, although I didn't realise this until afterwards. The time spent with team-mates is an unintended consequence of such an event and in our case this time helped forge our spirit. Card games engulfed the Open squad during our down-time, proving the theory that Ultimate players are competitive creatures. Cribbage, shit-head and cards-on-heads were perpetually played whenever two or more people were in our halls. The more luck-based the game the more greedily we devoured it. These games helped lift moral after losses

and return us to a positive frame of mind. This was a facet of the GB Open team from the last two years I had not expected when the journey began in March 2007: the team spirit and unity was exceptional. No player could get their head down over a mistake without a team-mate offering support and advice. The club barriers were broken down from the first session, GB was just a bigger club that played at a higher level beyond Tour. This philosophy grew throughout our time as team and when people started drifting out of Vancouver to go their various ways it felt as if a club I had been a part of for years was splitting up; various personnel dispersing throughout UK ultimate, Europe and beyond.

Dave Pichler

#### Worlds (Vancouver) Open Division

**GB Vs. Australia.**  
Peter 'Rodders' Wright.  
© Ruth Crawford 2008

**GB at the Beer Garden.**  
It's been a hard week at the office.  
© Ruth Crawford 2008

**USA Vs. Australia.**  
© Dave Sanders 2008  
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# getting out of your zone

Being confronted by a zone can cause difficulty for many teams, but is something that can completely derail one that is young or inexperienced. Whilst a team can choose not to play any type of zone defence, it has no option but to play O against a zone if their opponents employ such a tactic.

Understanding a few basic principles and changing your offensive mindset will enable you to develop a system that you, and your team, can use to defeat the tyranny of the zone. The specifics of any particular zone D will vary significantly but a robust zone O can operate successfully in the face of most varieties.

Of course throwing skills are a factor, especially when the wind is up, so it is important to develop a set of throws that you are confident with in windy situations. This will only happen with practice, so you need to get out and throw when the weather is not at its most favourable! As well as throwing with a partner, throwing alone in windy conditions will help teach you to master the elements. Both MTA and TRC require that you are able to 'read' the wind and make a precise (yet powerful) throw to make the disc react as you want it to. However, whilst better throwing skills are always helpful they are rarely sufficient to 'crack' a zone unless also allied to a coherent structure/shape.

Here's the first important thing to recognise: if the D plays one-on-one it allows the O to dictate the 'shape' of the game and therefore operate within their comfort zone. Conversely, by using a zone it is the D that governs how and where the battle(s) will be fought. A zone redefines the areas on the field that are available to be exploited and alters the manner in which you may capitalise upon them. Whilst a 'stack' based O opens empty channels either side of itself, within which one-on-one battles may be

contested, zones attempt to give the impression that all the vacant areas are under threat. Of course this is merely an illusion and there will always be ways of outmanoeuvring a zone.

Zone O relies on organization, patience and control to outwit the D. Teams confronted by a zone should see it as an opportunity to relax and enjoy! There will always be a free pass against the zone (even if occasionally this means breaking a straight up mark!) so there is no need to get flustered.

Zone D relies upon the defenders marking areas of the pitch, as opposed to individuals and also being able to apply pressure to more than one offensive player whenever possible. In order to counter this it is imperative that the O players stand apart from each other and do not allow one defender to cover two of them simultaneously.

Most zones have a minimum of three players committed to the area around the disc. If the O uses only two handlers in this area (one with the disc, one waiting for the reset pass – how many more do you need?) it has an advantage in that there will be five against four in the rest of the field (or even five against three). These players should be shrewdly positioned and well spread: one on each sideline (wings), two behind the cup (poppers) and one roaming around downfield (deep) – N.B. these last three should be interchangeable.

The first thing to say is that the handler's primary role is to maintain possession of the disc and manufacture openings, not make 'speculative' passes! Handlers have to be in control and are trying to engineer situations that exploit the areas in which the zone is vulnerable. There are three ways to overcome a zone: by going over it, through it or around it!

- Throwing over it is what the D is hoping for because it will mean an opportunity to challenge for the disc and requires the highest level of skill. Occasionally, however, this is the best option and it must be done!
- Passing through the zone, between the members of the wall, is difficult and fraught with danger: it requires confidence and misdirection. Holes will become bigger and appear more readily the longer a point progresses.
- Swinging the disc across the field, from flank to flank, is the simplest method of outmanoeuvring a zone. If the disc can be moved swiftly enough across the field there will often be chances to throw downfield. If these are denied the whole operation can be repeated in the opposite direction, helping to fatigue the defence and create further opportunities: this is where patience comes in.

The other thing required of a handler when they have the disc, is that they pivot and fake (believably and frequently) in order to threaten the 'seams' in the cup and keep it off-balance. Early in a point it is less likely that gaps will appear but after the cup has chased a few swings across the pitch and it starts to tire, gaps become more likely. However, the handler should be looking for them always: it will keep the cup from spreading its sphere of influence.

The handlers are also responsible for being the reset player: the positioning of this player is crucial and might be the single most important detail. The reset player's role is to redistribute the disc. They need to be able to move it away from the cup to give the O a chance to advance. This must happen quickly or the cup will prevent it and the O will lose ground. The key to being able to swiftly and effectively redistribute the disc is positioning.

Usually the reset will be behind, and on the open side of, the thrower but the critical point is their position in relation to the 'off' point (the widest part of the cup). Imagine a line running through this defensive player and parallel to the sideline. If the reset is inside of this line there is a good possibility that an alert defender will be able to prevent the next (swing) pass and so force the O backward. Therefore the position required is at least in line with the end of the cup but preferably wider.



Obviously this is not a problem if the reset chooses to stand on the closed side, but it makes for a harder throw, as the force will need to be broken.

My final word on the reset player is that they should take the disc moving forward into the space within the cup from time to time. This cut is rarely over five metres but it can result in the cup being dragged out of position, as defenders try to deal with the incursion, and this in turn may open up passing lanes to other players.

Width is the next factor to consider, as it is crucial to challenging a zone. This means the wide (wing) positions are vital, yet they are the most widely neglected of all the positions. Width is a major ally of the offence and a bane for the D, so it is wise to have one player positioned on each sideline. These players must be versatile, they have to offer the swing option, be a handler when 'trapped' and, if the disc



advances down the opposite flank, be ready to strike. However, they must also be resilient as both the O and the D can often overlook them! Recognise also that being trapped on the sideline by a zone is one of the hardest challenges a thrower can face, so do not abandon a weak thrower to that position.

And so to the poppers, they must position themselves beyond the cup and align themselves with the seams that run between the defenders: if a handler can create/exploit a passing lane through the cup the zone will struggle to regain coverage, so being prepared and in position for this moment is key. The two poppers, in

concert with the deep, must work as a team, find pockets of space and be alert and ready at all times. I would not advocate these players 'crashing' into the cup (although sometimes it is a necessary evil), for me it is much more valuable to allow the reset player to attack this space.

Finally, when the disc is still the receivers should hold station: find a spot where they might be thrown to, hang out there, always trying to maintain separation from the D, and being ready to receive a pass. When a thrower is confronted by a wall of bodies it is hard enough to pick out any pass without adding the extra complexity caused by having a fast

moving target! That is not to say that no running is required! Whenever the disc is moving, players need to be cutting to a new position to be available, wherever they will next be needed. This is most obvious when the disc is swung across the field. At this moment the players beyond the cup should be heading for positions upfield of where the disc will finish swinging, ideally for immediate continuation. N.B. Players with roles behind the cup tend to cut laterally (at least until the cup is breached), on the other hand the wide players stay close to the sidelines and move up and down the sideline(s), depending on where the disc is and when they will be needed.

In conclusion I would urge that you never capitulate to a zone. Rather add a little swagger to your game, exploit the free passes, enjoy making the D run excessively and then exploit the wide-open spaces that will exist once they are incapable of maintaining containment. Oh, and don't forget to take yourself out throwing the next time a hurricane wanders by!

Si Moore.

Worlds (Vancouver) Mixed Division.  
USA Vs. Canada.  
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# pulling out

## The Rob Alpen Interview

When and where did you start playing ultimate?  
Virginia Tech University, 1998

What attracted you to the game? And what was your main sport before that?

The fact that you wouldn't get beat up for disagreeing with a 18 stone guy who was 6'6". But seriously: the traveling, the friends, and getting to be quarterback and wide receiver at the same time. Up until 18, I played tennis at a good standard, after that it was basketball.

When did you arrive in the UK?  
January 2002

Who did you play for in the US? What was your best ultimate moment prior to getting here?

New York. Jumping over a Portland, Oregon player for a goal in a vicious backdoor game at UPA nationals in 2001.

You joined Clapham when you arrived. Can you remember what your initial impressions were of Clapham and of UK ultimate in general?

It was a bit of a reality check really. Playing in NY had been pretty glamorous (if ultimate can be glamorous), teaming up with some of the legends of the game. My first Clapham practice was a rainy, windy mudfest on the common in February. I pulled a calf muscle a half hour into it, needless to say I didn't think of things very highly at that point! My first tournament was Tour 1 in Bristol in March. It rained lightly so the pitch was an ice hockey rink (think slippery surface and rock hard underneath) and there were 20 mph winds...and we lost.

I guess you've been firmly in charge at Clapham since 2005 - although you were hardly quiet before that. Can you

share anything about what you feel has supported the club's success in that time?

The idea that it's you and your mates against the world. We built a very close knit team based on self sacrifice for the good of the team and were able to convey that to incoming players. Maybe we didn't have the GPM of some other teams, but we worked hard on the pitch, enjoyed ourselves off it and reaped the rewards.

We both believe strongly in the need for ambitious UK players/teams to compete in the US at least once a year. Can you explain your views on this?

There's no doubt in my mind that the UK has some fantastic players across all divisions. The problem sometimes is that people don't set the bar high enough for themselves. I love seeing young players explode onto the scene in big games in the States, it just opens their eyes to what the game is all about. On the other end of the spectrum it shows some people's weaknesses that they didn't even know they had.

What do you make of the current competition structure in the UK and Europe? Specifically what do you make of EUCS and what do you think should be happening next in the UK system?

The EUCS is a great step forward and one really borne out of the Champions League that the top European clubs set up in response to getting drubbed at the 2002 World Clubs in Hawaii. As far as the UK system is concerned, the season is just far too long and should be condensed. When you're playing competitively for 8 months a year there's no way that you're at your best all the time and that breeds the Si Weeks 80% philosophy (then one day you try to run 100% and your hamstring snaps off and you have to get it surgically stapled back on).

If the UK is going to start getting medals at Worlds, which of our



current strengths/advantages should we seek to maximise? And which weaknesses/gaps should we focus on eliminating?

The young crop of players coming through is far beyond any that I've seen in the UK and it's here we should focus our energy in the future (at both the junior level, but especially the university level). As far as weakness, it kind goes back to my first point. The biggest weakness is no homogenous system for teaching the game and especially the skills. You watch any other top team in the world and they have a consistent style of throwing and cutting, you watch a GB or British club team and it's 25 different approaches.

What was the most exciting game you've ever played in and ever watched?

Played in would be a toss up between Leeds at Tour 2 in 2003 or Flying Angels in pool play at Rostock in 2005. Both games were played in terrific spirit and only had 5 turns for both team in games to 17. The quality under pressure in both made it a joy to be a part of. Watched is without a doubt UPA 2000 semifinals between Condors and DoG where Condors ended their 6 year run. It was a cage match of epic proportions that just wouldn't be allowed these days.

Of all the people you've played with - who would you take on the line with you for sudden death?

Alex Bowers, Guy Bowles, Nasser M'Bae, Alex Nord, Steve Dugan (Condors), and Walter VanderSchraaf

(NY).

Without telling us who you would sub off, who would you have if you could have anyone that ever played?

Kenny Dobbys, Damien Scott, Fortunat Mueller, Steven Dugan, Walter VanderSchraaf, and Alex Nord. Actually I've played with all of those people in a tournament of some sort during my career. I can't believe that an overrated chump like myself has played with the greatest ultimate players to touch plastic, wonders never cease...

Many people will be unaware that you are leaving us. Where are you going?

I'm off to Geneva (and Chamonix on the weekends!) to pursue a similar role to that I had in London, but not at a bank, which seems like a good idea right about now. Got the 7 year itch I guess.

We're all going to miss you in our own way. ;-) Will we still see you playing ultimate (commuting to Clapham from Geneva?) Or are you done? Either way - enjoy the skiing!

I might pop up here and there on occasion but I've got a lot of skiing, climbing, and biking. I'll be putting first in line. I've really enjoyed my time in the UK and want to especially thank all of my Clapham teammates throughout the years for their support and hard work, it's been a great family to be a part of.

Questions by Si Hill

Tour 2 (Cardiff).

Rob Alpen pulling for Clapham.

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# EUCF a pushpass view through the lens

Ahhh, cold and wet October, the perfect time to get the best teams in Europe together for a 3 day event in Paris. A few weeks before the tournament I got news that one teams might have dropped out, so my brain started to work out if Brighton could fill the space. After checking out travel and accommodation plans to get a rough cost out to the team, I was told that the space was no longer available. Then I got a call from Felix asking me to go and help him film for Pushpass, and as I had already managed to mentally free up that weekend for ultimate, I said yes.

Before you read on, you have to imagine that most of what I witnessed was through a video camera, which doesn't give you a very good view of "everything" that is going on. Not that I'm not biased and opinionated anyway. I already thought the tournament was going to be weird, as there were no two pitches next to each other, they were all a five, ten or thirty minute journey away. This was the trade off achieved by having the tournament actually in the city, within the shadow of the Eiffel Tower.

## Day 1: Pool Play.

No massive surprises here. Clapham got off to a shaky start against VIF (Swedes), who used their long game to take an early lead against the reigning champs. With no real conditions (it was pretty cold, and slightly damp) VIF played well - they are a great indoor team too, but duly succumbed to Clapham as their offence got rolling. The Clapham boys were a bit miffed that their pool seemed hard, but beat FAB (Swiss) who seemed to have a bit of a development squad this year. The Swiss still had enough big names (Lorenz/Barry et al) to score with cheese, but not the depth to stop Clapham's offence. The show game was tight - but Ragnarok (Danes) were fortunate that Clapham made a



few uncharacteristic errors. The Rags were very smooth scoring off the pull, making use of the windless conditions. Final result was a win to the Danes.

Fire won their pool surprisingly convincingly with solid performances all round. The Jack Suns (French) were not as good as their SW division win implied, though they played better later in the tournament to finish 6th. A quick chat with a few players after they'd beat the Bad Skids (Germans) showed their delight at finally performing well in Europe. Chevy were looking strong winning their first two games of the day, and playing HUT (Fins) in their last. HUT lost to Prague whom Chevy beat earlier, but the Finns played well and took the game 14-12. There were a few tic-tac calls in the game, and a great send-back from a HUT player who'd just jumped into Dav's back - but in the end Chevy took the pool in a 3 way tie.

## Day 2: Quarters/Semis.

I filmed FAB vs Feldrenner (Germans) in the pissing rain on Saturday morning. It was on the only turf pitch (except for the stadium) and it was miserable. The Germans' method of offence was to get it to 21 (or 22?) who was fun to watch except for his floppy blonde hair. The Swiss used their experienced players to take the win, giving them a quarter against Fire. This quarter was on the same pitch, which was looking a little Mansfield-esque, but seemed firm and not too slippery to turn on. Fire looked confident, and

were able to force turnovers from the FAB offence, by shutting their long game down and waiting for errors. I remember a nice layout from Rodders, and a great catch from 77 off a fast TQ assist, at some point in the game.

In the biggest upset of the tournament, Chevy took Clapham to the cleaners 14 - 12 in a quarter final filmed by Felix. I didn't see it, but I did have a shower and go to bed.

My highlight of the weekend (apart from sharing a room with Felix) was the Fire vs Ragnarok semi final. It was great to see the Fire boys playing their best - and beating one of the best teams in Europe. Fire made a good start and led the game through the half to around 11 - 8. Ragnarok started a come back. At 11 - 10 I heard one of the more experienced Rags getting his team going with the line "if we take this next point we'll take the game!" I'm fairly sure he deliberately said this in English, and his team worked hard and put the point in to tie the game. It was 11 all game to 13, with the edge to the Danes and Fire needing to score to stay in it. A couple of turns later and Ragnarok were 12 - 11 up and it looked like game over for Fire. They finally put in an offence point with Loopy slotting the disc to Rodders, making it double game point. The Danes worked it up off the pull, but threw a hammer for the score which zipped out the back of the zone, giving Fire a chance to take the game, which they did with Rich Turner assisting Gaz for the win. Exciting stuff.

The Skogs-Chevy semi was disappointing in comparison, with Chevy not able to keep up with the slick handling skills of the Swedes. It was a blustery game, with a big cheer to the first point against the wind. Chevy relied on the wind to let them play a compact zone, but Skogs bust out with the smarts and then were patient to put scores in. There were

some spectacular plays, in particular a great second bid catch from Bev for a Chevy score and a big shout from the spectators.

## Day Three: The Finals.

The Stadium was pretty impressive. Lots of seats with a good view but as in other stadium games in Europe, they'd put the pitch in the centre of the field, and not closer to the spectators as I would have liked. The women's final was very exciting, with the Woodchicas (German stars) ramping up their D to choke Icen's lead and take the game.

The Open Final started off great, with Fire taking an early lead after Skogs started without their smarts turned on. Then there were the calls, which tested the crowd's patience, and meant that later there were very legitimate calls which got booed instantly. Some of the Fire calls seemed to take a while to sort out, which bored the crowd and put them on the side of Skogs. I could spend more time on this - but the previous two sentences pretty much cover it. After Skogs got going they were unstoppable, and Fire never really got back in the game. Despite this, my favourite moment from the 2nd half was a DJ layout to IO backhand break, assisting Rodders' layout score. Skogs took the win, and the title, and were the best team that I saw playing in pretty much every way.

## A Few Opinions:

- 1) One venue is better than 7.
- 2) Don't bother arguing for ages in the final (especially against Skogs).
- 3) The European teams were all real fast in between points, putting the GB lot to shame.
- 4) Standing on a chair in the rain for hours and hours is not fun.
- 5) Eurostar bookings are still not working properly.

Tom White



# EUCF men

## fanning the flames

The past year has not been kind to me: a surgeon was tightening the screws in my broken hand when I should have been playing in the final of Europeans in Southampton; a cracked and dislocated shoulder forced me out of the Tour 1 final; and, far worse, I was a full-time carer for my father during Tours 2 and 3, and Worlds in Vancouver. Dark times indeed. My great hope was that EUCF in Paris would provide some light at the end of the tunnel. Let me tell you how the Fire camp made sure this hope was fully realised.

One of the attractions of playing Ultimate in Europe is the challenge of winning the tactical battle. At home the top few teams know each other inside out, because we play each other so frequently. On the Continent however, we know much less about the opposition and we have to learn and adapt on the pitch. The first consequence of this is that you will lose if you do not figure things out quickly enough. Results often seem to be influenced by how late in the game the "Ah ha" moment occurs. (Freespeed's failure to figure out Feldrenner spoiled Fusion's EUCF.) Therefore, a clear-thinking and proactive approach to tactics is vital.

So, the start of each game is extremely important. This is especially true for the defense, as they can dictate to the offense in the early exchanges of a game. Of course, if the defense starts poorly, then the opposition can figure out your game plan whilst still winning points, negating any advantage. One of the reasons for Fire's success at EUCF was the strength of our starts; they were electric. We went up by a few points in every single game. The secret? Having a very competitive warm-up involving games of 3-on-3 and drills with aggressive defense.

Another key to Fire's success at Europeans was mental toughness. This

was aided by taking a tight group of just sixteen players. Equally important was our emphasis on advising junior members and an absolute veto on players hiding when we had the disc. This is critical as British teams tend to have much greater strength across the squad than our European counterparts. For example, although top players in British and European squads are fairly well matched, the less experienced British players are often far better than their opposite numbers in Europe. This means that it is essential to play through your entire squad, and all of our less experienced players excelled in this regard.

These strategies were instrumental in propelling Fire through the earlier rounds to the final of EUCF, where, once again, we made another electric start to take a 4-1 lead. However, Skoggs raised their game and, although our defense was consistently excellent, our offense could not quite break free of Skoggs's shackles. The main challenge we faced was an understandable desire to play too safely in the final. But, by not taking on big throws - for example, to our striking deeps - we made defense easy for them.

I am desperately disappointed not to have won EUCF, but Fire return from Paris with a great deal of knowledge, experience and belief that will enable us to make the final step up to the top of European Ultimate. For, while EUCF was certainly a turning point for me personally this year, I believe this is merely the start to a year of exceptional performances from the whole Fire squad.

*Rich Turner*

**EUCF (Paris).** Fire Vs Flying Angels.

Nick Wong collects the disc.

Al West tosses it all the way.

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# EUCF women

## screamy iceni

It began like a bad horror movie. We were a team of happy Ultimate players. Then slowly, right before the European Ultimate Championship Finals, players started disappearing. One by one. What began with wrist and shoulder injuries exploded into a flurry of incidents: pneumonia, mountain bike accidents, an injured coccyx from ice skating. By the time we boarded the Eurostar to Paris, we were down to 13 players.

To be fair, I should point out that a lot of teams I've played for in the past would have been ecstatic just to have one sub. Six would have been cause for hugging, screaming, and general celebrations that may or may not involve a bloody ritual sacrificing one of those subs to the Gods of Good Weather And Pitches Without Holes.

In fact, most teams have experienced tournaments, perhaps even seasons, where a number of the players are down. They all manage somehow. In American football, players are even still paid when they are injured. Maybe they don't get bonuses for games but that must be tough when you're already earning \$100,000. In Ultimate Frisbee, unfortunately, lack of budget prevents paying £2 million for a transfer, so injured team-mates only leads to forcing that player whose only role should be CATCHING THE DISC IN THE ENDZONE AND NEVER THROWING IT to become replacement handlers.

Not that we have any non-handlers. However, a number of our strategies for EUCF did rely on having at least 14 players. Namely, a distinct Offence line and Defence line.

We've been playing in O and D lines since Tour 2. There's a method to this madness. See, often cutters get WAY too into their role and decide they want to fake out, not just the other team, but the handlers on their

team as well. This leads to a heated and often eloquent discussion of: "But why did you change directions?" "It was a fake!" "But why did you change directions?", in which time the opposition has usually scored twice. One way of avoiding this is by sharing pitch time with the same six people the whole tournament, which gives you plenty of time to get used to each other's subtle signals: winking, nudging, pointing, etc.

Sadly, our Offence and Defence lines had to be scrapped. That left us with another nightmare: we had to sort out subs. And when there's no rule to determine whether you're supposed to go onto the pitch or not, well, everyone knows what happens:

Someone: We need one!  
Player 1: Sort of steps on pitch.  
Player 2: Tentatively steps on pitch.  
Sees Player 1.  
Player 1: Oh.  
Player 2: Oh, sorry.  
Player 1: Sorry. Oh, I thought you -  
Player 2: No, did you want to -  
Player 1: No, sorry.  
Player 2: Go on.  
Player 1: No, it's okay, you go.  
Player 2: No, it's okay, you go.  
Player 1: No, I insist.  
Player 2: No, just get on with it!  
Player 1: Oh well, if I must.

Oh, and I guess you get more pitch time with fewer players. It's a shame, really, because if you come all the way to Paris to fight for the gold, you really want to spend the majority of the game standing on the sideline chatting with the cute Swedish boys.

We started off by defeating Hot Beaches (Prague), which we could pronounce, and Misscoldisco (Italy), which we could not. An 8 p.m. win against Primavera meant a) we'd earned a spot in the 9 a.m. semi-final on Sunday and b) we were just in time for the pumpkin carving contest (Sadly,



we did not represent at this pumpkin carving contest due to sleeping for the aforementioned 9 a.m. semi-final). We defeated Leeds the following morning, and began to prepare for the final against Germany's Woodchicas.

We may have had fewer players, but we had our secret weapons. The players' packs came with Energy Bombs - herbal tablets that look like swamp mud - which we'd saved for our last game. If you have never tried one of these, your life is probably incomplete. They make you want to throw puppies through glass and crush bricks with your butt. We were definitely, totally fired up. So were the crowds. The final was held at the lovely, French Charléty stadium, where about 100 spectators were squeezed into 20,000 seats.

Unfortunately, the Woodchicas must have saved their energy bombs for the

final too. Or maybe those uninjured subs were the key. It was a close game, but Woodchicas somehow pulled ahead to win 14-11. Which was unfair. Because we were the stronger team, really, in spite of only having 13 players. All the Germans had were tall handlers who could break your force, fast cutters and incredible hammer throws.

C'est la vie. It was a good tournament where Ultimate, though not the real winner at the end of the day, was at least good for a laugh.

*Mara Alperin*

**EUCF (Paris).** Icenis Vs Woodchicas.

Amy 'Piglett' Bartlett starts the play.

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**Tour 1 (Bristol).** Clapham Vs. Fusion, 3rd-4th play off. Paul 'Voodoo' Waite makes a pretty good attempt at a layout pointblock. © Dave Sanders 2008 [ultimatephotos.org](http://ultimatephotos.org)