



Ultimatum 2013

Annual UK Ultimate Magazine



Brandon Malecek

Tom Abrams



Tom Martin-Hall

Chris Whittle

Chevron v Fire UK Nationals © Andy Moss 2013

Ultimatum

was brought to you by:

Editor

Mara Alperin
uk.ultimatum@gmail.com

Design & Photo Editor

Jack Goolden
malago.co.uk

Ultimatum Staff

Craig Berry, Si Hill, Rich Hims

Ultimatum thanks

Volker Bernardi, Patrick van der Valk

We'd like to thank "James and James Fulfilment" www.ecommercefulfilment.com for their help and support with the distribution of Ultimatum 2013.

The Tour, top 16

RGS	♂	New Entry	♂
Cambridge	♀	♂	5
Black Eagles	♀	♂	17
Bear Cavalry 1	♀	♂	3
Magic Toast	♀	New Entry	♂
DED	♀	♂	4
Bristol 1	♀	♂	1
Brighton Breezy	♀	♂	3
Thundering Herd 1	♀	♂	=
Shiny Happy Meeple	♀	New Entry	♂
BAM!	♀	♂	8
Peeps	♀	♂	9
Scarecrew	♀	♂	3
BAF	♀	♂	4
ABH A	♀	♂	1
Thundering Herd 2	♀	♂	7

Iceni	♀	♂	=
Nice Bristols 1	♀	♂	=
SYC	♀	♂	2
LeedsLeedsLeeds	♀	♂	1
Punt	♀	♂	1
Seven Sisters 1	♀	New Entry	♂
Crown Jewels	♀	♂	1
Nice Bristols 2	♀	♂	2
Blink	♀	New Entry	♂
ROBOT	♀	New Entry	♂
Iceni Savage	♀	♂	2
Swift	♀	♂	5
Something Different	♀	New Entry	♂
Relentless	♀	New Entry	♂
Dragon Knights	♀	New Entry	♂
Northern Lights	♀	♂	2

Clapham	♀	♂	=
Chevron Action Flash	♀	♂	=
EMO 1	♀	♂	8
Brighton City	♀	♂	2
Ranelagh	♀	♂	=
Ka-pow!	♀	♂	4
Fire of London 1	♀	♂	4
Fire of London 2	♀	♂	7
Devon 1	♀	♂	3
DED	♀	♂	6
Manchester Ultimate	♀	♂	10
Glasgow Ultimate	♀	New Entry	♂
LeedsLeedsLeeds	♀	♂	1
BAF	♀	♂	2
Cambridge Ultimate	♀	♂	8
Jest Ridiculous 1	♀	♂	1

An open letter to UK Ultimate players

My name is Brian and I'm a 34 year old Irish man who lived in the UK for 2 years and has played 10 UK Tour seasons since 2001 (so far). I'd been meaning to write this for years, and I finally got around to it.

So I like to say a very genuine... thank you very, very much to UK Ultimate.

Why?

1 - You lot: I've met a huge number of lovely UK players through the years. Genuinely, you're great. So thanks!

2 - Anglo-Irish Frisbee relations: UK Ultimate has been HUGELY welcoming to Irish teams and to the Irish Flying Disc Association over the years. Back in the early 2000s, we had a tiny playing population but we were always welcomed at tournaments at every level from the fun, to the university, to the Tours and the Nationals. It has been of HUGE benefit to developing the sport in our country over the years. Hopefully, through participation, we've contributed something back along the way, but I'm personally really appreciative of being so often and so readily welcomed by UK Ultimate. So thanks!

3 - Fair play: You guys play fair. I don't know how much people are aware of it, but culturally, there's very little occurrence or tolerance of cheating in the UK. Are there plenty of games with disagreements? Of course. Are there plenty of refereeing errors? Certainly. But I never played in a game where I thought teams were doing so wittingly, or were happy to play without respect for the rules or their opponents. Thankfully that's something I've only had to experience a handful of times over the years, but certainly never in the UK and never against a UK team. While that's only my personal experience, I suspect many other people have enjoyed the same. So thanks!

That's it.

Very genuinely, thanks very much GB!

Brian Mac Devitt

Duffa hat tournament © Andy Moss 2013



Editor's note

Having been involved with the UK Ultimate community for several years now, it was a strange experience to spend half of 2013 in the US and be part of a new Ultimate community, where I had to explain that the "GBR" on the shorts stood for "Great Britain", and that the Iceni logo could be read the same upside-down (à la Dan Brown). But being an Ultimate community, the players were very welcoming, and I played in many great tournaments, including my favourite, "Get HoHoHo", a festive, ugly Christmas sweater themed event.

The players I met had varying knowledge of UK Ultimate: some people recognised the name "Clapham" from their appearance at the elite Chesapeake Invite this August; some couldn't name any UK Clubs but were curious to hear about the UK scene and intrigued by the "taking the out-of-bounds pull to the brick mark" rule. Most knew that Ultimate was featured at the World

Games this July in Columbia, and quite a few had donated money to the campaign to fund live streaming coverage. Though we were cheering for different teams, we were all keen to support the players and showcase our sport.

I followed the Extended European Ultimate Club Finals and was excited when UK Club teams took home gold medals in all four divisions, and spirit medals in three! It's fantastic to see top Club teams performing so well, both in terms of standings and spirit. GB teams also competed in international tournaments in Spain, Canada and Poland.

In this issue, we have articles on all the GB teams and the World Games, as well as features on the importance of playing sideline and how to take the perfect Ultimate photograph. A huge thank you to the writers and photographers for contributing: we are fortunate to be able to share with you the work of so many talented people.

We are also grateful to the copy-editors: Jessica Benson, Kiley Brown, Jon Cater, Hayden Cole, Jon Francombe, Scott Anthony Martin, Nancy Rawlings, Sarah Roushanzamir, Thom Saunders and Rachael Venables. Thank you to Craig Berry and Rich Hims: their insight and editing contributions cannot be appreciated enough. As always, special thanks to Jack Goolden for once again making Ultimatum so visually stunning.

And finally, thank you to UKU CEO Si Hill. I'm sure the last thing he needs is more Ultimate-related questions from me, but he answers them nonetheless.

We hope you enjoy Ultimatum 2013!

Cheers

Mara Alperin, Editor
www.ukultimate.com/ultimatum

Newbie to Nationals

From googling 'ultimate' to playing at Nationals in one year



My first year of Ultimate has been crazy and eventful. I started playing in November 2012, competed in all kinds of tournaments and have met so many amazing people.

The decision to try out the sport arose when I moved to London; after settling in I wanted to try something new. I had heard good things about Ultimate from a couple of my friends at university who played for the local team, and I had thrown a disc a bit for Track & Field, so I decided to Google "Ultimate in London" and see what there was. ABH came up in my search, I got a welcoming response from them... and then suddenly I was off to Winter League!

When I joined, the season had already started and my first experience was playing in the London Winter League. I was told to be somewhere near Putney Heath at eight o'clock on a Sunday morning which, at the time, seemed like the middle of nowhere! It was freezing cold so I wrapped up warm and made my way down. When I arrived I realised that I didn't actually know what anybody on the team looked like or who I should talk to. Fortunately, Ultimate players are friendly, so that was easily sorted. Soon enough, I was huddling up with the team, trying to keep ourselves warm while we waited for the pitches to unfreeze. Finally the throwing and warming up started; there was cake, sweets, coffee, mulled wine and a little bit of banter for only having trainers, instead of proper boots.

Playing Winter League was great. It took me one game to get into it and have enough courage to run onto the pitch, but after that it was good fun. Having come from a super-competitive rowing background, it was strange that the girl marking me in one of our games was helping and teaching me when I was, at times, aimlessly running around. I felt like part of the team, and the tactics,

strategies, winning (and losing) was cool. Winter League was followed by the pub where I learned a lot about the team and was amazed at how well I got along with all the players.

After my first Winter League, I wanted to stay involved! ABH was very inclusive and super helpful – so I turned up to all the training sessions and tried to pick up as much as possible. People helped me in the drills and games, and taught me to throw whenever I wasn't on the field. Since Ultimate players are so welcoming, I found it really easy to get along with everyone, and I really started looking forward to practices and seeing all my new friends.

During the season lots of training and tournaments came up. Although I had only been playing for a couple of months, I decided to play at the Costa Brava beach tournament in Spain. Costa Brava was amazing and really fun – combining lots of Ultimate, crazy calls and games and many parties.

I also signed up to play for ABH at Mixed Tour – despite my limited experience. I was put on the second team and had an absolute blast. London Winter League and Costa Brava had been fun and somewhat competitive, but Tour was another level with specific training, plans and much more pressure. As I am so competitive, I thrived on this, and, while I did mess up a couple of times, my fast legs made up for it. Playing against different teams from all around Britain was an amazing experience. Before starting I had no idea about the size of the sport in the UK, but turning up at the Cardiff University pitches and seeing the whole field full of Ultimate players was cool and surprising at the same time. Some crazy matches, brilliant points, team spirit, winning (and losing) ensued... this was everything I had been looking for in a team sport.



Ann Gardiner

DED v BlackEagles Nationals © Graham Bailey 2013

I couldn't believe it when the Mixed season ended in May, just when the good weather had started! However, I got to enjoy the sunshine by playing for Northern Lights at Women's Tour 1. Playing with only women was a new experience, but just as enjoyable as Mixed Tour. The summer season also involved London Summer League which was a great way to spend my Wednesday and Thursday evenings.

The official season finished with Nationals where I again had the amazing opportunity to play with ABH. The experience was incredible; crazy-good spirit, exciting matches, tough games, rain, shouting, cheering and lots of hugs.

It's been an absolutely crazy year, and I'm very much looking forwards to the next Ultimate season. I've made some great friends, trained hard, seen some great sportsmanship and had an incredible time.

Now I'm looking forward to getting better and learning the next stages of the game. It's thanks to the help and so many great opportunities I've already been given in my first year, that I've been able to come so far, so quickly, in this incredible sport.

Helina Meos

Mom, it's time I told you

Why Ultimate is good for daughters

This article was previously published on the Bay Area Disc Association Blog: blog.bayareadisc.org. Reprinted and adapted with permission.

Feet come pounding down the field, shouts from teammates: "Go, go, go! Yes, you've got it!"

My eldest daughter jumps, catches, turns, lands on the grass in the end zone and leaps into her teammates' arms.

For six years I've sat on a sideline, in heat, rain and wind, watching my children play other mothers' children in Ultimate Frisbee. Those six years have coincided with tremendous growth for my daughter naturally, but the person into whom she has grown has been deeply shaped by this sport.

Whenever a parent of a daughter asks me what Ultimate did for my daughter, I say three things: It gives them a voice, gives them a body and gives them a tribe.

Since Ultimate Frisbee is self-refereed, the player herself has to make a call of foul, out of bounds or stall count. Her fellow players and coach can't call it, and she might have to argue with the other player about her call. It might take her years to do



iceni celebrate winning Gold at XEUCF © Graham Bailey 2013 grahambaileyphotography.com

that, as it did my daughter. But when she raises her head and yells, "Stall!" it's all her. And here's the thing – her take on the situation: a rule has been violated – is assumed to be valid. She and the other player will stop the game, decide if they can agree on the call and their decision stands. It can't be overruled by outside agents. Even

if they disagree, she gets to make that call and the game will resume either from that point or the one before it.

If a girl wants to play well, she'll spend a lot of time throwing a disc, running, diving, jumping and generally working very hard. She'll learn that placing her fingers in just this kind of v-shape on the underside of the disc will make it curve this way or that. If she balances on the balls of her feet and swings an arm down, she's more likely to make that hand block. For a society that puts a lot of messages out for girls to focus on the outsides of their bodies, and what they look like, Ultimate is the antidote. It forces them to inhabit their bodies fully in order to play. When my eldest daughter watched the girls on the high school team take the field when she was a skinny little thing, she'd sigh, and say, "They look like tigers. I want to be like that." And they did. That arrogant, stalking walk, the way they'd line up for the pull – these were girls who had more

on their minds than how they looked. They were there to play.

And those girls? They embraced the young woman my daughter was right as she was then – no matter that she wasn't as tough as they were yet. The boys on the team formed the same kind of welcoming mob. Every tournament begins with an arm-linked circle. Every loss is met with supportive hugs. Every win celebrated with joy. The Spirit of the Game – the idea that there is a higher ideal than winning and fierce competition doesn't mean acting in unsportsmanlike ways – supports the players. My girls play with kids younger than themselves; they play with adults and against teams of college students. In each case, it's assumed that they are all the same kind of people – Ultimate people. These people are family of a kind, forged by lots of work, lots of experience and more fun than seems quite reasonable.

Stefani Leto, Ultimate Mom



Lotus v Cosmic Girls XEUCF © Graham Bailey 2013

Matalan

Sporting Promise

Two years ago, Ultimatum featured an interview with Liam Kelly about the work that was being undertaken by the UKU with the Youth Sport Trust (YST) through the Matalan Sporting Promise (MSP) programme. The aim of the programme is to increase participation in sports at secondary school level, with Ultimate as one of the 'alternative' sports introduced into schools along with softball, dodgeball and lacrosse.

That on-going work has led to some huge strides in the visibility and accessibility of Ultimate to the wider public, especially in schools and among children. Since the project began, over 300 secondary schools have been introduced to Ultimate, most of which have had no exposure to the sport before. Celebrity sportspeople such as Amir Khan and Sir Steve Redgrave have also had a taste of Ultimate, taking part in exhibition games with some of the children engaged with the sport.

"The YST advertise Ultimate to schools in a particular area and the schools then decide if they want to get involved," explained Liam.

"Once they've done that, we try to help them out with getting started in Ultimate. It's essentially school-led and we are there to offer them the help they need to get going once they engage with us."

The UKU provides assistance in the form of YST-funded sessions for teachers and sports leaders to teach them the basics of coaching new Ultimate players. The game is slightly adjusted for schools, with 5-a-side games played both indoors and outdoors on similar sized pitches. The YST also provides funding for equipment – thousands of discs have been sent into schools through this programme.



Dan Sumner

Dodjie Link

"In June we'll be running the National Schools Championship alongside Junior Nationals in Birmingham," said UKU CEO Si Hill.

"The key aspect of what we're trying to do with that is participation and producing a competition that fits into the school model.

"The competition is specifically for schools. Teams are 5-a-side and the rules are slightly simplified to make it easier for teachers. The format looks a bit like an indoor tournament – short games, small teams – even though it might be played outdoors or even on the beach.

"We're trying to adapt to make it easier for the schools to get involved."

The second aspect of the work going on with the MSP is establishing community clubs to provide a bridge from school sport to further participation, which in the case of Ultimate is to club teams. This part of the scheme is in a pilot phase that is now coming to an end. Five community clubs were set up: two each in Manchester and Birmingham and one in Stoke-On-Trent.

"The target group for the community clubs is slightly older than the schools group. Matalan and Sport England provide funding for facilities to play and for coaches and coach education, so that the club can continue once the external support has gone. It's been challenging, and only one of the clubs has really taken off – the club in Stoke," said Si.

He continued, "The key thing with that was that the local Ultimate community really engaged and became members of the club. In other clubs this wasn't always possible – despite some really committed levels of help that we received."

"In particular, the times of day that some of the clubs ran were out of our control, but made it virtually impossible for other people to join in. It is much harder to get a club off the ground when the only person that has played before is the external coach."

"In Stoke, the club will outlast the support they've been given, which is the aim."

The main factor in the success of both parts of this project is the involvement of the wider Ultimate community.

"We would like to help volunteers get involved with school teams and tournaments to help them with learning the rules and coming to grips with self-refereeing; a kind of 'rules-coach' to help facilitate the games rather than make active calls," Si continued.

"It's important that people realise how they can get involved and how important that could be," said Liam.

"The community clubs pilot scheme is ending soon but there's a possibility we could be starting more in future and looking to go to different places. Current Ultimate players can go out and engage with those new clubs, try to get involved and see what they can do to help. It's vital if we are to carry on with projects like this."

Sean Colfer

The next generation

Ultimate in primary schools

In June 2013, 13 teams representing 7 primary schools competed in their first Ultimate tournament in Mitcham, South London.

The programme, set up by the Merton School Sport Partnership (Merton SSP) and supported by the Harris Academy Merton, was aimed at increasing participation in sport in the local primary schools of Mitcham. 15 young leaders from local secondary schools were trained by the UKU via the leadership programme to coach Ultimate. They were assigned to a local school to run an Ultimate after school club for 8-11 year olds, for five weeks looking to compete at an interschool tournament at the end. On the day, each team was proud to show the new disc skills they'd developed and demonstrate different strategic understandings of the game. The final was highly entertaining with some great throws, catches and interceptions.

This programme was a great success! Children from the local primary schools discovered and got involved in a new sport and leaders developed their coaching skills. However, this tournament is not the end: a number of primary schools and leaders have decided to carry on with the after school clubs. A legacy has begun; the Merton SSP will be looking at advertising Ultimate to a further 33 primary schools in the upcoming year.

What can we make of this?

- Kids love throwing "Frisbees" as far as possible.
- Schools are very interested in "Frisbee": from a business point of view, it ticks the "other sport" box.
- It's a new sport aiming to improve participation with the pupils who aren't interested in mainstream sports.



Photos © Mark Signal 2013

- The PE curriculum is changing to encourage fair play – Spirit could be just what they're looking for.
- Schools have PE funding for the next two years so can look at purchasing discs.

How do I set something like this up myself?

- Approach a group of schools with the idea of a tournament (a short term goal to aim for is five weeks). Look at School Sport Partnerships in your area or a cluster of schools.
- Get teachers and teaching assistants to do all the coaching. You probably have a job so can't afford to go to all the schools at 3:30 p.m. Propose a Teacher Training Course but if the schools can't make it, the UKU have some great documents for game ideas.
- Target children less involved in mainstream sport. The sporty children are already supplied with a lot of club opportunities, and schools are interested in increasing participation, not replacing a football club with a Frisbee club.
- Simplify the sport: recommend teachers to coach various games including target practice, "balltimate". Developing disc skills is more important than teaching the ins and outs of Ultimate such as stall counts.
- Use referees for the tournament: it will be difficult to implement self-officiation in their first tournament
- The tournament should last 2-3 hours with short games during school time. Longer can be too complicated for releasing pupils from lessons. Only cover basic rules, no stall count, lenient on travels, etc.
- Give yourself lots of time to organise the event and contact schools. Schools are busy and need to know everything in advance to be able to plan.
- Enjoy it: it's fun and is very rewarding!

Mark Signal

Growing Awareness

I've been involved in 'three years' worth of advertising Ultimate as a club and sport at the University of Bath. This year was the first time I've experienced a large number of students that have not only heard of Ultimate, but know what it is and have played before at school. There were also students who specifically sought us out to sign up to the club and give it a go, which was completely new to me.

Looks like the UKU objective of Ultimate in every school is starting to take effect!

Alex Brooks
University of Bath Captain 2012-14



The 8th man

The importance of being involved on the sideline

The motivation for this article came during the European Youth Ultimate Championships (EYUC) whilst coaching the GB Open U17s. During one game I was letting an injured player know that he still had an important role to play because “sidelines win games” and it was time to “go and get your block”. He asked the quite legitimate question: “How?”

I have been playing the game for nearly 20 years and I don't recall anyone ever giving me a clear answer to that question. This article will attempt to answer the question and will, I hope, be used to encourage discussion about playing sideline rather than being seen as the gospel on how to do it.

I believe that there are many things a sideline can be used for, including tactical advice on what to expect (e.g. “big thrower currently has the disc, beware the huck!”) or where to line up (e.g. “force is home, you are on the wrong side of your man”); providing a pass count to enable defensive changes; or simply providing some encouragement to your teammates.

In my view there are three basic rules to playing sideline: be loud, keep up with play and keep it positive.

Be loud

A loud sideline has some major psychological impacts. It can put the opposition into a negative spiral or lower their belief that they are still in the game, and it can motivate your team to forget the tired legs and push on for that block or deep strike. The louder your sideline, the stronger these psychological aspects become. This aspect of the sideline can be generated at any time and it is good practice to be loud during the warm up to both inspire your team and get you ready to play the sideline role.

Keep up with the play

To be effective on the sideline, you need to be able to contribute to the game. This process starts with everyone on the team knowing what the players are about to do, which can be achieved by having the entire sideline listening to the set-up called on the line. Good Spirit requires you to avoid blocking lines of sight for the opposition; it is therefore good practice to kneel before your seven heroes.

Note also that there is an important distinction between ‘keeping up with the disc’ and ‘keeping up with play’. If your role is to support the deepest player, then keeping up with play requires that you position yourself where the deep player will hear you and you can see the threats that they are required to cover. If your team is attacking the end zone then your contributions from the halfway line will be less than helpful. Use both sidelines to spread your noise across the entire pitch.

An added benefit of keeping up with play is that the players off the pitch stay moving, which prevents them getting stiff during long points or periods of being on the sideline.

Keep it positive

We have all seen a teammate drop a disc for which they should have used two hands, or misread a pass and bid at the wrong time or place. At this point I have witnessed numerous teams enter what I call the ‘negative sideline spiral’, where the sideline acts as a self-destructive force and can do more harm than good. Here, the sideline stops giving positive comments and starts attacking the action rather than supporting the player in order to help win back the disc. If a player makes such a mistake,

it is an issue for training after the game or talking about between points, not for yelling during a point. If the game is underway then you are all on the same team and need to work together. You are still on the team while on the sideline!

Spirit

A loud sideline is certainly a valuable tool, but is it good Spirit to have a sideline that could ‘psyche out’ opponents? I would say it depends on how it is done. In my view, examples of poor sideline Spirit could include making calls from off the pitch, getting in the way of line passes or insulting or belittling the opposition.

However, during a game against US team Twisted Metal in 2006, I played against the most dominant sideline I have ever experienced. They were LOUD, they kept up with play and the noise was almost continuous regardless of their being up or down, scoring or being scored on. Playing against this sideline made it the most mentally draining game I have played and I know that my performance was affected by it. Yet I never felt that this was a team with anything less than full respect for their opponents and the concept of Spirit. I traded shirts with the guy I was most marked by; this still reminds me of the importance of playing sideline, and of a great battle.

A strong sideline, if used properly, can give your team an edge in all areas. It encourages those on field to be better and it keeps those waiting for their turn on field involved. It really is a win-win way to play the game.

Jolyon Thompson



Photo © Rachael Venables 2013



Southern comforts

A cultural comparison of Austin and London

In the summer of 2012, I received my acceptance letter to move across the pond and study for my master's degree at a university in London. In true Ultimate fashion, I had picked out my Mixed and Women's teams before I had settled on housing or even chosen my courses. Playing Ultimate as an undergrad at The University of Texas introduced me to people who became my closest friends and gave me some great memories, and I hoped that joining teams in London would do the same for me here. However, I hadn't realised that I'd have to get used to an entirely different Ultimate culture.

My Ultimate career started like that of many other American players – an info flier and a headfirst dive into the Ultimate way of life – with trainings, parties and tournaments taking up more time than actual classes. My Women's team, Melee, was both known for being one of the speediest

teams in the South and running the largest Women's tournament in the country (hosting a record 54 Women's teams in the spring of 2012).

But what was truly crucial to Melee's success was being located in the thriving Ultimate hub of Austin, Texas, home to powerhouse Club teams like Showdown (an elite Women's team that finished 4th at US Nationals this year) and Doublewide (2012 USAU Club Championship winners in the Open division). Many of Melee's drills and plays came from Doublewide's playbooks, and the 6:30 a.m. Monday morning track workouts came straight from Showdown's weekly routine. Moreover, the widespread popularity of Ultimate afforded Melee the opportunity to travel and compete against elite teams across the nation.

Following my move to London and introduction to UK Ultimate, one change caught me completely off-guard. It wasn't the fact that everyone called cleats "boots," or even the various differences in rules. What truly surprised me was the high level of Spirit of the Game embedded within UK Ultimate culture.

Before moving to the UK I had never been a part of a Spirit circle, nor even known my team's Spirit score at a single tournament. It was astonishing to me that, even after multiple accidental bumps and fouls with a player on the opposing team, she would approach me after the game and genuinely thank me for the match. In the US, civil interactions amongst top-tier rival teams are rare, and many matches end with little more than a high-five line. I've even seen bitter on-field feuds continue off the field... and this is just within Women's Ultimate.

Moreover, I was overjoyed at the opportunity to be able to play on



Darbi Donaldson

both a Mixed and a Women's team. US players competing in the USAU Club Championship series are forced to choose between playing either Mixed or Open/Women's because the Mixed, Women's and Open qualifying tournaments are held on the same weekend, which generally leaves Mixed teams rather lacking in numbers. The fact that the UK has separate seasons for Mixed and Open/Women's (at least until Nationals), means UK Club players have a unique opportunity to hone their skills and be at the top of their game year-round, giving them a leg-up on other international teams.

So while I miss competing at the top level, I feel US Ultimate has clearly forgone Spirit in pursuit of competitiveness, and it might be time that US Ultimate takes a hard look at its roots and the genesis of the game. Competitive play shouldn't mean a loss of Spirit, and I believe the UK is a fine example of that. It is also my hope that the UK continues to hold separate Mixed and Open/Women's seasons, as it's a truly unique and beneficial opportunity for UK players to maintain a high level of play year-round.

Darbi Donaldson





Nick Smith

Get yer boots on

BAMI Mixed Tour 3 © Graham Bailey 2013 grahambaileyphotography.com

Pre-game and post-game rituals

Over the last 10 years, teams and individuals have vastly changed how they become mentally and physically prepared for each game. It wasn't so long ago that the norm for a team warm-up revolved around hacky-sack and leftover herbal supplies from last weekend's festival. Although some may still prefer this retro approach, from looking around at the UKU Tour events, it is a fair estimation that most, if not all, teams complete a dynamic warm-up prior to matches. Various professional sports have led the way in optimising sport-specific preparation and it appears that we are following suit, each taking what we feel will add that bit extra to our game, individual performance and team result.

Body temperature

The warm-up is intended to raise the body's temperature (the clue is in the name!) and its ability to perform the movements necessary for your sport. In this instance, the primary areas are sprinting, throwing, and change of direction. The focus areas for a warm-up should be constructed to include a gradual increase in intensity, using a mixture of running drills and dynamic stretches, until the player is working at 70% of maximal heart rate. A warm-up at this intensity has the effect of allowing an increase in the range of movement of the joints

and improving aerobic performance; this improves flexibility and running efficiency. It is best to be systematic when working through the body so you don't miss any areas, in particular the shoulders, back and neck.

Enhance performance and reduce injury risks

I'm sure that everyone reading this has, at some point, played without warming up. You most likely didn't get injured but you probably felt pretty awful for the first few points (and I highly doubt you played your best Ultimate). The most important aspect of a warm-up is to enhance the upcoming performance – I wonder how fast Usain Bolt could run 100 metres without a warm-up? Possibly still pretty fast but definitely not his best. For me, the warm-up is a time to reduce long-term injury risk by incorporating drills that make me move more efficiently while activating the correct muscles.

Prepare psychologically

I believe that a big part of the warm-up is mental preparation. There should be a clear demarcation between getting ready ("faff time") and warm-up, with not too much general chit-chat so I know that my team is focussed on the game/training ahead. It is a good time to think about your personal aims and to undertake some visualisation

of how you want to play. Also, simply knowing that you have prepared your body to the best of your ability gives you the confidence to go into the game at full speed.

And now... how to recover from Ultimate

After a long day at Tour, the last thing you feel like doing is a warm down, but it makes a huge difference to how your body will feel the next day. Experts working in elite sport currently recommend 10 minutes of active recovery – swimming and cycling being the best options. Obviously this is not practical for us – so what should we do instead? A short jog/skip/walk followed by some stretching is a good place to start. When we work our muscles hard, they shorten; unless we stretch them out, they will stay shortened. If we do this repeatedly we can run into problems caused by muscle imbalance. Don't get me wrong, having a stretch after playing won't turn you into a superstar yogi – you have to do extra stretches for that, when you haven't just run around all day. However, it is important to at least get back to where you started the day! After playing it is OK to hold stretches for a bit longer: 20 seconds does the trick. Be gentle and don't bounce into the stretch.

Physiotherapy

I'm sure a lot of you already see a physiotherapist, or have done at some stage in your playing career. They can play a great role in rehabilitation from and prevention of injuries. They can assess your body and instruct on which areas you need to stretch or strengthen. Tell them you play Ultimate – many now know the sport quite well and can therefore tailor your treatment; if they don't, it's worth explaining the movements involved. You can incorporate some of your 'physio exercises' into your warm-up, either for the whole team or individually if you just feel the need to do a bit extra.

There are numerous views on pre-game and post-game rituals, but I believe warm-ups and warm-downs are an important part of your tournament routine. When done correctly, warming up and down will improve your performance, and can help reduce risk of injury. Remember, take care of your body!

Georgie Winborn

Georgie has several years' experience working as a Physiotherapist in professional and amateur sport, private practice and the NHS as well as co-ordinating the medical support for UKU tournaments and GB teams.



A note on physiotherapists at UKU events

I would like to take this opportunity to talk a bit about the physiotherapists at UKU events. They are primarily there to deal with emergency situations such as head injuries and fractures. Their secondary role is to help players with injuries picked up at that tournament. They are not a free service to any player that fancies a bit of a rub or think maybe they should get that niggle they have had for months looked at – a physio at home should be seen for these things. If you have an injury that requires constant taping or a specific muscle to be loosened, you should either learn how to do it yourself or get your local physio to teach one of your teammates to do it for you. The queues at Tour this year were very long and I believe they should stop; players should take responsibility for looking after their bodies over the winter and between tournaments. Hopefully, establishing a good warm-up and warm-down system in your team will help with this.

Georgie Winborn



Sand master

How to transition to playing on the beach



It's tempting to regard what is required to win on sand as being significantly different to what is required to win on grass but other than a few considerations, I don't think that is the case.

If you look at the performance of teams on grass and on the beach then you tend to find that the best teams on grass are the best on sand (and so for the weaker teams). The fundamentals of what drives success are the same for both surfaces: namely throwing, catching and playing with a disciplined intensity. That said, there are a few issues which are specific to the beach that place more emphasis on certain factors.

1. Field dimensions

With the smaller pitches on beach there will – at more or less all levels – be someone (if not everyone) who can hit a pass to the end zone relatively accurately from wherever they are on the field. This places more emphasis on a strong mark and downfield team defence. Inside-out throws that gain a lot of distance and get the defence off balance can be a real killer here and need to be stopped.

2. The weather

It's almost certainly going to be windy (though the World Championships of Beach Ultimate (WCBU) in 2011 was strangely wind free, until the last day) and it is likely to blow in a different direction in the morning than in the afternoon. Accept that fact and prepare accordingly.

3. The impact of turnovers

The smaller pitches and the fact that the turned over team, being in the wrong position, will likely struggle to adjust to defence quite as quickly as they might on grass (often because they are a lot more tired) means that they are especially at risk the moment the disc is turned over. If you are marking the player on the disc, try to disrupt their first pass so they look for their second option. If you are marking

the last man (nearest the opposition's end zone) you need to quickly assess the risk and make a call about where you need to be. On offence, take the quickest, easiest pass to get the disc moving. This doesn't just apply to a dead disc from a turnover: the best pass is always the easiest, most open throw. Frequently this throw is to someone behind you who is running to catch up to the play. Get the disc to them and they are likely to be a step ahead of their marker, enabling an open look downfield.

4. Pick offence if you win the toss

Shorter games mean it is difficult to dig yourself out of a hole if you end up a few points down. The only exception to this rule would be a scenario where the wind is beyond your capabilities: then you need to choose the end you think offers the best chance of survival. But fortune favours the brave...

5. Always take away the dump

It can be tempting to get a breather when marking the dump handler but this is probably the worst thing you can be doing on defence anywhere on the field. Easy resets give the offence a rest and give the thrower time to pick a throw to a downfield player who has set up a well-timed cut to space.

6. Create space

Again, this is something which is important on grass and is made more so by the smaller dimensions of beach pitches. GB Mixed Masters won WCBU 2011 and GB Masters won the European Championships of Beach Ultimate (ECBU) 2013 using a horizontal stack as our starting point and using movement off the disc to create space. If you have a dominant player, consider isolation plays but these should be an exception rather than the rule.

7. Always wear sunscreen (and never wear sandsocks).

Rob McGowan



UKU Beach Nationals for 2014

We've had great beach tournaments happening around the UK for years, but we don't have a proper UKU Beach National Championships.

Well – it's time that changed! UK Ultimate is looking for organisers to run the event over a weekend in the latter half of the summer. In the longer term we can probably expect to see a beach competition structure running alongside our existing events on grass – but for now we're just looking to get things formalised with a weekend-long Nationals in July, August or September.

In 2014 we are not planning to create any qualification structure – but will do so if there is clear demand. For now, we are aiming for an event with Open, Women's and Mixed divisions, and at least eight teams per division.

In addition to simply wanting to make sure there is a Beach National Championships, we want to take advantage of the development opportunity that beach events present, as they generally take place in visible locations where there are often (unless it's raining) plenty of passers-by.

Si Hill



ECBU, GB Masters celebrate winning Gold © Claerwen Snell 2013



Matthew Baker

COPA del SOUL

GB Grand Masters, Copa del Soul © Andy Moss 2013

ECBU Results

- Open – 2nd
- Women's – 4th
- Mixed – 7th
- Masters – 1st
- Women's Masters – 2nd
- Mixed Masters – 2nd (Spirit)
- Grandmasters – 3rd

When you go to play at Skegness, you expect it to be a little windy, but when you turn up on the beach and see about 100 wind turbines just off the coast, you know it's time to celebrate – that is if you're on the GB Grand Masters team.

We had to be over 40 years old to qualify for the team, and all our opponents were mostly 20 years younger than us, so we knew we only had one advantage – most of us can read a hospital pass in the wind.

By the end of the tournament, people were coming to watch us, and I heard comments like, "We can really learn from these guys, just look at how much thinsulate they're wearing!"

It's just a shame that it wasn't quite so windy and cold in Spain.

Jack Goolden

"It's hard to get excited about the Masters division - it doesn't really count." Si Hill, a few years ago



Nelson Chan

Joe Blogs

Everyone's got an Ultimate blog these days

Ring Uni Nationals © Andy Moss 2013

Clubs, associations, tournament organisers and mouthy players are all at it. I often think of starting one for my own Ultimate ramblings called *Point Blog*. If my son gets into blogging, he could have one called *Chip Off the Old Blog*. After congratulating myself on how witty I am, the train of thought gets derailed as I start thinking to myself: "Blogging isn't writing. It's graffiti with punctuation" (or so it has been said) or else "Someone else on the Internet got the idea first. Again."

Ultimate blogs aren't new, but the past year has seen an increase in their number, quality and prominence, which makes me question my first thought above. Without the time, money, drive or originality to create my own, I've set out to list the building blocks for *Joe Blogs's Hit Blog*. In short, run one like you would run a dream tournament:

- Audience participation – comments, polls, competitions and social media are the equivalent of stands on the show pitch. They encourage

engagement, discussion and even the bit of friendly heckling that we all like at a big match.

- Number, selection and location of divisions and pitches – diversity broadens the appeal of the articles, and provides views from different fields.
- Lots of cameras – everyone loves a good Ultimate photo or video clip.
- Numbered and named matching kit – appearing professional and identifying the writers you love, and love to hate, is important.
- Squad sizes – there should be enough writers to provide a variety of articles, but not so many that they cannot regularly contribute.
- Tournament location and entry fee – everyone loves affordable quality that's easy to find.
- Tournament name – a catchy title to draw their eye and describe the feel and aim of the blog to prospective readers.

- Scheduling and number of matches – posts should be regular, evenly spaced and shorter rather than longer if in doubt.

Perhaps on a larger scale, the analogy can be stretched to produce a blog that incorporates the equivalent of tournament parties, trophies, accommodation, ground condition, pitch-side water, showers, bins, parking, lost property or even decent vegetarian food options.

Does the rise of blogging affect Ultimatum? Apparently not, and not just because it's sent to all UKU members. Ultimatum admirably covers so many of the points above, which explains why some people cherish their collections of past issues. The passion of the unpaid editors and contributors shines through in the variety of articles and photos and even in the occasional quiz. Without this, the money from membership fees spent on nice glossy paper would be wasted.

The annual publication of Ultimatum encourages season reviews, written after a time for reflection, and articles on topics that grow in the background. The editors and contributors have plenty of time to go away and think between publications. In contrast, blogs have an edge by discussing topics as they arise, potentially expressing controversial opinions and allowing reader interaction.

The increase in number and quality of Ultimate bloggers is a healthy sign of the increasing popularity, professionalism and recognition of our sport. The era of televised Ultimate is only a couple of big pulls away, thanks to the growth of websites like ngnultimate.com and playo.tv, which will be a boon for budding Ultimate bloggers and pundits alike. Speaking of which, should the BBC ever have an Ultimate highlights show, I hereby claim my space on the pundits' couch on *Match of the Disc*.

Manny Bennett

ShowGame

What is The ShowGame?

Many Ultimate players love to know what's going on at a tournament, even if they aren't able to attend. A lot of teams have Twitter and other such media outlets to tell their fans how games are going, but what about the whole tournament? The bigger picture? The ShowGame started out as a conversation between Josh Coxon Kelly and David "DP" Pryce. We wanted to draw this picture for as many players as possible in the UK. We felt that the UK didn't have much of an online presence akin to SkyD Magazine and Ultiworld for the US and Get Horizontal for the rest of Europe. As players who have played at many levels across different divisions we felt we could begin to fill this role. This all began around March 2012 and started fairly small with the blog website and social media outlets, from which we mostly covered tournaments, with the odd discussion piece from the likes of David Pichler and Sion "Brummie" Scone.

Our humble beginnings started to snowball, and we are now building up a working partnership with Get Horizontal as well as getting various mentions on – and providing contributions to – SkyD Magazine. Our reporting team for all three main divisions has been cemented and in a fantastic summer for UK Ultimate we've covered the European Championships of Beach Ultimate, World Games and World U23 Ultimate Championships, which we felt were very well received: we hope the teams and their families enjoyed it as much as we did!

The natural place for us to begin was in simple reportage of the major events of the UK Ultimate scene. We had seen the demand for this, and started ourselves off on our first aim: to promote and foster a sort of 'fandom' for Ultimate players. We found ourselves with a rhythm in which we acted as an online news column for UK Ultimate, and thankfully,

the online Ultimate community responded positively. Page views and interest grew steadily, and we took encouragement from this. However, after building up our foundations in reportage, we have big ideas for the future potential of The ShowGame.

'Discussion'

Some of our most popular posts at this stage have been those that express or discuss a certain predicament in the Ultimate community. The preoccupation of writers who posted on The ShowGame with such issues has led naturally to a comment/debate section, named with the subtlety of many possible friz-puns: 'Discussion'. We are firm believers that the voices of as many people as possible should be heard as we tackle the various options and problems that affront our sport, particularly in a world in which the internet is always helping what was once local to become increasingly global.

As an example, the US Ultimate community has recently seen a dizzying acceleration of many sorts: professionalisation through independent leagues, a complete restructuring of its domestic competition structure, and an overall rapid process of transformation that is still very much taking place. The speed with which a subculture community not unlike our own moved from one of grainy UltiVillage clips and banter on rec.sport.disc to one in which it was possible to become a professional athlete (that is, if you fall on the 'commercially viable' side of the gender spectrum) is startling. Now, US Ultimate can receive coverage and fame from ESPN and is a scene in which franchising, selling and becoming part of the mainstream has suddenly become a serious consideration for many. As this summer has emphatically confirmed, North American Ultimate is competitively dominant across the

board; it is undeniable that for some UK players, US Ultimate remains something to 'aim' towards, to look up to. Suddenly however, along with the commercialisation of many aspects of our sport, the natural down-flow of influence from the states to the UK now brings with it a political current.

We would like to use The ShowGame to provide a 'debate platform' for Ultimate players in the UK. By bringing together British voices, no matter how concordant or conflicting they may be, we hope to encourage discussion and debate on the many issues that crop up in our lives as Ultimate players, and therefore offer the chance to contribute to the shaping of our sport. The hope is that by providing a focus for these debates and a platform from which to speak, we can elevate the crucial thoughts and feelings of a vibrant community from the sideline, campsite, infuriatingly repetitive BritDisc rants, or that yearly Glastonbury Ultimate debate match to an open forum in which we can soberly construct a clearer picture of our complicated but unique community.

We can learn from, and be inspired by, Ultimate scenes the world over, but what is undeniable to us is that we should be pushing each other to

express what we want from our own scene.

We hope that people in the British community will take up the idea that we will only improve and get the most out of our relatively minuscule island on the world stage if we put our heads together in constructive debate. The key will always be contributions from disparate, honest and passionate sources. We think you will all agree that a dialogue between founders would scarcely do justice to its own publication! This has never been, and will never be, the aim. It is only through the community getting involved that The ShowGame will become of any real use in helping us move towards making positive change – and that is exactly what it is there for.

We have been lucky enough to have had 15 different authors cover topics ranging from Women's Tour to closing the gap between US and UK Ultimate, and we are always looking for more contributors and partners. If you want to contribute in any way, please get in touch!

www.theshowgame.co.uk
showgameblog@gmail.com

David Pryce and Josh Coxon Kelly



Focus puller

Capture the ultimate decisive moment

Sports photography is one of the hardest of its kind, and our sport does nothing to make the challenge easier. Ultimate is fast paced and unpredictable but I've found that the bid to capture that perfect score on camera can feel as good as if I'd made the grab myself... almost! I have been playing Ultimate for three years and photographing tournaments for around 18 months. If you want to give it a go, here are a few hints and tips that I have (slowly but surely) picked up along the way.

Pick your position carefully

Finding the right position to shoot from is an important, and often overlooked, aspect of a good photo. Sidelines are notoriously messy spaces and however brilliant the foreground action may be, the background will always affect the feel of your photo. Find the most aesthetic, uncluttered space of sideline that you can, and do your best to position the on-pitch subjects somewhere between you and that desired backdrop. Solid colours will often work best and an expanse of green field or the plain wall of a sports hall will give greater definition to your shot.

You also need to be aware of the lighting, particularly when photographing outdoor tournaments. Keep low or bright sunlight to your side, avoiding over-exposure. This will often cast striking and defining shadows across the players' faces and bodies.

Frame the image

Once you've got your position, you need to focus on the composition of the photo, making sure that it works as a whole. A good way to balance a shot is to position the eyes of your subject on one of the two (imaginary) horizontal lines that divide your picture into thirds. Our eyes are naturally drawn to action occurring around the 'lines of thirds' that criss-cross an image. This is called the 'Rule of Thirds' and is why

many great photographers will place the action on the (equally imaginary) vertical 'thirds lines' of an image. With the correct background it can be a fantastic technique that demonstrates context and directionality. Similarly, when framing bodies within an image, it is best to either focus from the waist up or else make sure that the whole body features tightly in the image.

I also believe that the best photos are often the ones with plenty of zoom. If you can see the disc, the player's expression and enough of the action to recognise the play, then you have, in all likelihood, caught something really powerful. Being close enough to a player to capture that incredible moment is a fascinating part of sports photography – and capturing something both athletically awe-inspiring and emotionally engaging can be really exciting.

Adjust your shutter speed and aperture

Shutter speed is the length of time a camera's shutter is open when taking a photograph, essentially determining the amount of light captured in the picture. A faster shutter speed will make your photos much sharper, capturing and freezing the smallest, fast-moving detail, while a slower speed will blur captured movement, giving the picture a sense of speed and energy. Similarly, the aperture controls the depth of focus of your shot; the larger the 'depth of field,' the more of your picture that will appear in sharp focus.

Shutter speed and aperture are largely artistic decisions and are more dependent on your personal preferences, the conditions of play and the capabilities of your camera. But don't be afraid to experiment with all of them and have fun with the effects you can create, all the while trying to do something different to the often-seen layout grab.



BurroElectrico DED Invitational © grahambaileyphotography.com

Watch the match

Any photographer will tell you that some of the best shots are a combination of sheer luck and uncannily quick reaction times. With this in mind, my final advice is to always keep one eye on the viewfinder and the other on the pitch. Don't follow the disc through your viewfinder but learn to predict where it's going and who will come into contact with it next. Sometimes standing downwind of the disc or behind the end zone of a high-scoring team is a great way to guarantee close-up action.

If you're focused on the thrower, in all likelihood you will miss the catch. So plan in advance and if you see a player running free and long, make sure to follow him or her!

Good luck!

Rachael Venables

How to get your photos in Ultimatum

As the person who trawls through literally thousands of photos to pick which get into this magazine, here's a checklist of what I'm looking for:

1. It has to be focussed.
2. Quality: Images in print need to be huge! If you look at your image on a screen, then reduce it to 25%, that is how big I can print it. The digital file should be several MB. Jpegs are fine, raw is better.
3. Expression: I like to see a face, preferably the main person in the picture.
4. Background: Telephoto lenses tend to flatten the image, so it helps if the background is out of focus to isolate the action.
5. After that, it's down to lighting, composition, and whether or not I know the person in the shot (although that happens less and less these days).
6. I don't like team photos. They are only really interesting if you're in them. I allow one each year.
7. Make your photos known to me! jack@ukultimate.com

Jack Goodlen

All over the Worlds

ulti.TV and the World Games

This summer, an incredible number of people came together to raise over \$15,000 to enable online video coverage of the World Games. Mike Palmer from ulti.TV tells us the story of how he started a global campaign from his home in Adelaide.

It was during my first meeting with WFDF Executive Director Volker Bernardi and some other WFDF heavies at the 2012 World Ultimate and Guts Championship (WUGC) in Japan that I heard about the World Games event in Cali, Colombia. I remember the meeting well: it was the end of a long day in humid weather, and we were carrying the ulti.TV HighView cameras and computers from field to field. I remember being distinctly unshaven, underdressed, dirty and sweaty. But it was good to finally put faces to names that I had seen on emails in the lead-up. I also had the privilege of meeting the WUGC tournament director, Masakazu Honda – one of the first Japanese superstar Ultimate players, and often considered the “godfather of Japanese Ultimate”.

I was handed a very sparse and general World Games flyer about the event and given some encouragement to contact the organisers. This flyer largely sat forgotten, but I knew the tournament was coming up, and it sounded like a fantastic excuse to go to South America and film some Ultimate!

As the date came closer, I did some back-of-the-envelope calculations on how I could get over there and film. Flights from Adelaide were about 3,200AUD (about £1,800) each way per person, not including excess baggage or equipment fees. Yikes! This put an end to that plan – bear in mind that ulti.TV, an online TV network dedicated to the sport of Ultimate, at the best of times, runs on the smell of an oily rag (or my bank account).

Undeterred by this initial setback, we started a conversation with Volker Bernardi about how to gain access and permission to get into the venues to film, and whether there was any money available to help fund a trip over there. Unfortunately, Volker explained that due to the high costs of the World Games, there was no extra money for video coverage. We thought this was a shame, because the World Games only rolls around once every four years, and events like these are the best means of showcasing our sport.

It was looking hopeless that we would be able to get over there to provide coverage. So I went for a change of plan, thinking that perhaps some US-based Ultimate media company would snap up this opportunity to film some awesome Ultimate.

Meanwhile, I had an idea to try to team up with a local Colombian to help us get some coverage, thinking that if I was lucky, I might be able to get an Aussie who was going over there to take an ulti.TV computer – and then we'd be in business!

We had previously made a highlight reel of Julio Duque, a Colombian who was currently playing in Australia, for him to send to the Colombian team coach, in a bid to make the Colombian World Games team. In exchange, I asked him for the contact details of a local Colombian who might be able to help us out.

Enter Rafael Araoz, who had experience working for an advertising and media company in Colombia. He was keen to help shoot some footage in Cali and provide some coverage of Ultimate. We started making plans to hire a camera and microphones from his company and fly him to Cali. That was early March 2013 – with four months to go.

Unfortunately, after all this effort, WFDF advised us that a local broadcaster had acquired exclusive rights to broadcast the events, so the World Games organisers had banned all unofficial coverage. It seemed that, despite all our best-laid plans, we were shut out.

Disappointingly, we also found out that the coverage schedule provided for only three games of Ultimate (out of a possible 17). Volker sent us the rate card for the local broadcaster and it was \$13,500 to have every game streamed live online through the official World Games website. This was actually very cheap for a multi-camera production and certainly cheaper than us trying to fly a crew over to South America.

At ulti.TV, we thrive on making stuff like this happen at the eleventh hour. We went back to Volker and suggested a crowd-funding campaign to raise the money. At this point the deadline for booking the local broadcaster had just passed, so we needed WFDF to negotiate an extension and agree to the campaign.

This led to a few nervous days waiting for a WFDF response. We finally got an email from Volker who had been granted the extension, meaning we had the green light to go ahead. This was Friday 12 July; the deadline to book the local broadcaster was Monday 15 July! We had just days to pull it together.

We reached out to you for help. At the last count, the international Ultimate community was in the millions. If everyone could contribute a bit, we could get professional footage of all the games to anyone with internet access.

We created a page using the indiegogo website – a crowd-funding platform where people can pledge money for campaigns – called Broadcast of

Ultimate at the World Games 2013. “We want the host World Games TV broadcaster in Cali to video ALL of the Ultimate competition and stream it online for free,” was our description. Our goal of \$15,000 (to pay for coverage and related fees) was a lot of money, and we weren't sure if we could make it happen. But we shared this site with everyone we knew, to nag, cajole and beg people to donate. Dan Clenton, ulti.TV's social media champion, deserves a big shout-out for promoting this far and wide and getting the momentum started. Our friends passed it on... and their friends passed it on... and the money started coming in!

The Ultimate community is amazing. Over 700 people donated, and we raised \$15,570 with eight hours to spare! This provided the \$13,500 needed for the coverage and paid for the PayPal, indiegogo and international transfer fees to get the money to Cali.

Thanks again to everyone for your support!

While ulti.TV weren't there on the ground in Cali, we were there in spirit, and kept everyone up-to-date on the broadcast and streaming. It was a wonderful success story thanks to so many passionate Ultimate players who, like us, wanted to see coverage of our sport played at its highest level.

Our mission at ulti.TV is to grow the sport of Ultimate. We believe that Ultimate is currently under-represented in the media, and that there is a lack of coverage of the game. We think that, by offering high-quality coverage, we can grow the sport of Ultimate.

Mike Palmer



The World Games



Yina Cartagena

Jackie Verralls

Colombia v GB © WFDF/Camilo Tobar 2013

This article was previously published on The ShowGame. The full article can be found here: www.theshowgame.co.uk. Reprinted and adapted with permission.

Arriving back in London from the World Games in Colombia has been a reality check. The tournament was the final part of a nine-month journey made up of seemingly endless trials, training weekends and relentless track sessions. It seems a long time to prepare for a tournament that was done and dusted in just two and a half days. Regardless, after nine months of all-consuming commitment – time, energy, emotions and funds – I was definitely ready to go to Cali and play.

From the moment we landed in Colombia we were treated like celebrities (albeit Z-list). It seemed as though the entire police force and army had descended on Cali; we had outriders flanking our shiny new team

bus and a designated police honcho to co-ordinate our every move. I could only presume the rest of Colombia was in turmoil because of it.

Preparing for the opening ceremony was so awe-inspiring, I would probably have flown out just for that. Boarding the bus in our box-fresh kit, I don't think anyone anticipated the thousands of spectators lining the streets outside the main stadium; as our driver navigated the road-blocks we took photos of the crowds who were taking photos of us. On the walk to the stadium, people were stacked rows deep behind barriers screaming and waving, waiting for our arrival. Before we knew it, our names were being chanted and Team GB had been 'released' through the cordon to go and greet the masses. It was a sea of red, yellow and blue flags, and warm arms clamouring for photos over the barrier, genuinely pleased to meet us.

In a blur of noise and camera flashes, we quickly found ourselves ushered to the back of the stadium waiting in a train of athletes and flag bearers from other countries. As we shuffled into some sort of order, the concrete underpass suddenly opened onto the vivid blue athletics track. The sound was deafening. I had butterflies looking up to the bright lights of the crowd as we stepped out and joined the parade – it was incredible! At some point amidst all the waving, t-shirt signing and photos, Si Hill managed to grab our attention from high up in the crowd. We were already buzzing but seeing Si's face there was the icing on the cake.

That was just the start. It was pretty ace just warming up on the stadium pitch let alone playing on the freshly-laid turf. Our second game of the tournament against the host nation was right after the Ultimate opening ceremony, which meant half of the



huge stadium had filled up. When we took the first point, the stadium was deathly silent. Then they scored and the place erupted; the crowd went nuts. Standing on the line trying to call our offence, we could barely hear what was being said. Heart pounding... nerves soaring... just for that feeling I would consider trying out for the team again. Not all the games were as intense as that one, but each had a bigger crowd than I'd expected.

Perhaps it would be easier to process the actual playing experience had we won. I'm not talking about bringing back a medal, but had we won just one of the five short games. Nobody likes losing. When you take a step back and realise how much you've sacrificed to be there and just how much support people have given you along the way, that's when it starts to hurt.

The most important take-home from the playing experience is what we can learn from it. There are lots of potential steps: expanding our player base at grass roots, changing the way we train and the structure of the training calendar, cultivating managers and non-playing coaches. The major positive here is that the first step has been reached – we're talking about what needs to happen and UK Ultimate has upped its viral game providing a forum for these discussions to take place.

As a relatively green player last World Games, I was pretty unaware of the tournament but hope this time around the profile of World Games and Ultimate's role has been raised. GB's qualification for the 2017 World Games rests in our hands; we need to keep up with the dominating nations both on and off pitch to have this opportunity again.

Sophie Edmundson



The World Games 2013 C A L I Los Juegos Mundiales



Japan v GB © WFDF/Camilo Tobar 2013

Thank you, ulti.TV

"Very grateful to the ulti.TV guys for getting the campaign set up so that we could watch world class Ultimate. Definitely worth staying up late to watch."

Dave "Neo" Anderson

"I hid myself in a small room reserved for confidential phone calls to watch the GB vs USA game."

Adriano Scarampi

"Iceni had four teammates representing GB in Cali. We really wanted to be able to support our teammates, but also watching the most elite players from across the world battling it out was excellent training material for us all."

Alia Ayub

"It was pretty awesome to see the enthusiasm of the ulti.TV guys bring the Ultimate community together at such little notice to make it happen. It would have been a massive shame if Ultimate's highest profile tournament hadn't been filmed."

Tom "Mum" Abrams, WG player

"The games were filmed like professional football games, with a lot of high definition close-up action shots which appealed to our families and friends back home, watching our joy and angst live. One of my colleagues watched every single one of our games... Having never watched Ultimate before, she fell in love with it!"

Issy Burke, WG player



Colombia v GB © WFDF/Camilo Tobar 2013

Knee nobbled

ACL injuries and prevention

This is an article about injury – something we all hope to avoid but that sometimes, quite literally, trips us up. There are injuries that take you out for a game or a tournament and others that take you out for an entire season. Knee injuries can end your season immediately. Specifically, ACL injuries (that's an Anterior Cruciate Ligament injury for all those medical geeks) are on the rise in Ultimate.

Your knee is a complex hinge joint, taking forces of over ten times your body weight when you run, jump and change direction. There are four major ligaments in the knee that act like taught elastic bands offering stability and limiting the knee to a safe range of movement. Yet, like rubber bands, when your knee is stretched too far in the wrong direction, they are likely to snap.

The ACL is the most commonly injured ligament and unfortunately there is a growing group of players in UK Ultimate who are joining what I call the "A.C.Hell" club. While many of these players have had successful reconstruction and subsequently returned to full strength, I am more generally concerned about the number of injured knees in our sport. As we continue to train and play harder, I think it is important that we seriously consider knee, and particularly ACL, injury prevention.

Why is ACL injury so common among Ultimate players? Rapid deceleration, sudden changes of direction and twisting are all common causes of ACL rupture (i.e. a full tear of the ligament). Add in jumping, pivoting and cutting and it is clear that the basic movements of Ultimate put an enormous strain on the knee ligaments. Yet many players will play their entire career without ligament injury, which leads me to conclude that there are other influences at play.

The ones I've identified include how well-prepared our bodies are for the strain we put them under, individual biomechanics, impact (from the ground or other players), and, unfortunately, your gender. While men are undoubtedly also at risk, women can be up to eight times more likely to suffer ACL rupture. This can be due to a more severe angle between the hip and the knee, which puts more strain on the knee joint. The risk of an ACL tear (full or partial) is one that we, the women of British Ultimate, need to be aware of. During my time at LLeeds, between 2008-2011, the team suffered four ACL ruptures, a scary statistic.

Following a strength and conditioning programme and taking care of your muscles and joints will help prevent knee injury. It is also important to work on take-off, landing and deceleration techniques in order to protect your knees. We all need to take personal responsibility to ensure we are prepared for the strains we choose to put our bodies through when we play. Yet for some, ACL tears will remain a greater risk and I wonder whether there should be some form of endorsed Ultimate ACL injury prevention programme. Indeed I would go so far as to say that all women's teams should consider following such a programme as the risk is so much greater for female players.

However, despite all prevention, the bottom line is that sport is unpredictable and injury is always a risk. You cannot control other players or the environment around you and if you do find yourself dealing with a knee injury here is my advice (in this order):

1. Rest, Ice, Compress, Elevate.
2. See a qualified physio.
3. Get referred for an MRI scan even if you have been diagnosed. Although there are tests that can indicate

ligament damage, the complexity of the knee joint means that without an MRI the extent of damage is impossible to assess. When I went through this experience, while I did not doubt the expertise of the professionals, I was advised by both my doctor and physio that I was unlikely to have torn my ACL. I decided to pay for an MRI out of my own pocket and it turned out that this was the best decision I could have made, as it showed a significant tear to the ACL. This allowed me to make informed decisions within a couple of weeks of the injury. There is a company that does MRI scans for the bargain price of £200 (no really, this is a bargain!), or you can be referred for an MRI through the NHS, although you may have to wait several weeks.

4. Prehabilitate your knee following your physio's advice. Make sure you are as strong as possible before any form of surgery. Most surgeons will not touch an un-prehabed knee.

5. Work hard and know you can get back. While feeling sorry for yourself is often unavoidable and is OK for a while, the only way to get back to wherever you want to be is to put in the hard work and believe you will be back on the pitch again. Set yourself goals to breakdown this process and build your way back.

While there is a great support network among fellow ACL injury sufferers, many of whom have gone on to represent GB, I believe we need to start thinking seriously about ACL injury prevention. Coming back from any knee injury (ACL or otherwise) is not easy; it is a long process and can take its toll physically, emotionally and financially.

Prevention is always the best medicine and perhaps just being aware of the risks is the first step towards reducing the number of ACL injuries in our sport.

Chesca Tyler



Magnus Wilson

Fast food

Ultimate performance nutrition

We've all been there: that hazy Sunday morning where despite having promised yourself last night that you'd only have one beer and turn in early, you find yourself on the end zone line for the first game of the day, fuzzy-headed, dehydrated and having eaten nothing since the Saturday night takeaway.

Performing to the best of your abilities at an Ultimate tournament can be a difficult task, depending as it does on natural talent, adequate training, rest and the right state of mind. Nutrition also has a large part to play. Optimising your carbohydrate, protein and fluid intake before, during and after tournaments can not only improve your performance but also improve your recovery and reduce your risk of illness and injury. The advice in this article is focused on practical nutritional advice for recovery after a day at a tournament.

Remember that nutritional requirements vary between each individual and what works for one person may not work for another. If you would like more tailored advice, please feel free to contact me directly at www.eatandthink.co.uk.

Exercise primes our bodies to make the most of the food we eat after a tournament. In the first few hours after competition, carbohydrate is utilised much more efficiently than normal to replenish muscle glycogen stores and aid muscle repair. The choice of food is essential at this time and should focus on quality sources of carbohydrate and protein. This is especially important when play is due to resume the next day. Replacing fluids is also essential for performance on the following day, but can also have a large impact on immunity. Dehydration increases the risk of picking up coughs and colds (which are surprisingly common in athletes due to inflammatory responses, increased stress hormones and immunosuppression);

this then adversely impacts training and ability to compete.

The challenge

One of the main challenges at a tournament is the timing of food replenishment. With the warm-down, showering and re-grouping of the team, the evening meal is often hours after playing. If you avoid eating during this time you are missing a trick. Capitalise on the body's ability to efficiently 're-stock' itself after playing and eat as soon as possible after games – even a snack or recovery drink before the shower will start the recovery process.

The guidelines for recovery

Carbohydrate: ~1g per kg of body weight each hour until the main meal.

Protein: ~1.2g per kg of body weight during the tournament day, including 10g as a post-tournament snack to aid glycogen replenishment.

Fluids: Replace 150% of fluids lost during the tournament day.

Fat: Focus on low-fat foods.

Practical suggestions

Guidelines are great, but how does this apply to you? Try out some of the suggestions below after competition.

Portable recovery snacks:

- Sandwich with lean protein filling (such as skinless chicken, tuna or reduced-fat cheese) and 1 piece of fruit
- Cereal bar and low fat yogurt
- 50g Twiglets with 200ml chocolate milk
- 3 slices of malt loaf
- Bread roll with cheese or meat
- Banana with a handful of dried apricots and 150ml skimmed milk
- 2 cups of pasta salad with tuna



Recovery snacks for home:

- Large baked potato with cottage cheese and 250ml skimmed milk
- 2 slices of toast with scrambled eggs
- 2 cups of rice with 40g lean chicken
- 2 slices of toast with 220g baked beans
- 3 or 4 cups of cooked porridge with dried fruit and honey
- 2 crumpets with peanut butter and 250ml skimmed milk
- 2 slices of toast with banana and peanut butter

Recovery drinks:

- 250ml milkshake
- 350ml drinking yogurt
- 300ml fruit juice plus 200g low fat yogurt
- 250ml meal replacement drink (e.g. Slimfast)
- 250ml smoothie (fruit, low fat yogurt plus honey)

The meal after a tournament is typically a takeaway in a teammate's hotel room or a visit to a local restaurant. Follow these simple tips to improve your nutritional intake when food choice is restricted:

- At **curry houses**, aim to replace creamy curries, fried rice and naan breads with tomato-based curries, plain basmati rice and chapattis. Choose a lean protein source such as chicken or fish.
- Menus in **Italian** restaurants are a minefield of high-fat foods, but do have some good sources of carbohydrate with all the pasta, rice

and bread. Aim to replace deep-pan pizza, meaty lasagne and carbonara dishes with tomato-based pasta dishes and seafood.

- **Chinese** and **Thai** restaurants use some good cooking methods including steaming and stir-frying. They often have a good choice of lean protein sources including fish, chicken and turkey. Aim to avoid deep-fried foods and enjoy a good portion of rice or noodles with your meal.

Key points

Choosing appropriate food and drink after tournaments is essential for:

- Refuelling carbohydrate stores
- Replacing lost fluids
- Encouraging muscle repair
- Keeping the immune system strong.

If a meal is not planned or imminent at the end of the day, aim to replenish stores with a recovery snack rich in carbohydrate and protein with plenty of fluids. The old saying is true: "to fail to prepare is to prepare to fail", and good nutritional practices on tournament days require planning. Don't rely on snacks and meals that can be bought at the tournament itself; plan, buy and try out snacks and drinks after training to make sure you've got it right for you, for competition day.

Louise Davey, Sports and Exercise Performance Dietitian.

Emo

It's not about being lonely or depressed

EMO's 2013 season was a peculiar one. We emerged from it having surpassed – in the most impressive and satisfying way possible – the aims we set ourselves in the cold, winter days preceding Tour, but with our main goal having been frustratingly unfulfilled. Reflecting now on the season, there were highs and lows, but in the end it boiled down to two familiar factors: effort and commitment.

Our aims were laid out at our AGM in September 2012: to reach a Tour semi-final and qualify for the Extended European Championship Finals (XEUCF). We had qualified for EUCF at Nationals in 2012 and performed well in Frankfurt, so confidence was high as we headed into the season.

We had a much larger pool of players to choose from than in previous years. Several students attended EMO trials for the first time. Birmingham and Nottingham provided a large number of the squad but players from elsewhere also added to the group. Several players who had been with the club for a number of years were cut, highlighting the rise in quality.

"The aim for the coaching team was to continue making progress from our highest ever finish at Nationals," explained EMO coach Joe Wynder.

"The athleticism and basic throwing ability of the squad as a whole wasn't what we wanted. We recruited some good athletes and really focused on improving throwing ability throughout the year. Tactically, we decided to change some things from our traditional approach to try and mask our weaknesses and really play to our strengths."

The preparations for Tour went well, with valuable warm-up games at winter leagues and the Fog Lane Cup giving the newer players experience, and the veterans time to learn the new systems. The disappointment of



GB U23 v Emo Tour 2 © Graham Bailey grahambaileyphotography.com

finishing eighth at Fog Lane, behind teams we had beaten at Nationals, was offset by the fact that the under-strength squad, weakened by withdrawals, had learned important lessons ahead of Tour 1.

The aim for Tour 1 was to better our 9th place seed to provide a platform for the semi-final we had targeted. Losses to Fire and CUSB in the pool were mitigated by a hugely satisfying, sudden death crossover victory against Brighton which gave us a shot at Clapham in the quarters. Ultimately, that was a step too far. A revenge win over CUSB gave us a final match against GB U23, who would become a familiar foe. A loss left us sixth, but the third best UK Club team (if you remove GB U23, Bad Skid and Clapham Dogs from above us).

It was at Tour 2 that we really began to gather steam. A huge win over Fire in the pools gave the whole squad a lift and, after another sudden death win over Brighton and a disappointing yet encouraging defeat against Chevron, we achieved our first aim: we qualified for our first semi. Clapham were still too good for us, but the final game against GB U23 produced the closest score-line yet between the two teams. Another loss dropped us to

fourth, but we were, yet again, the third best Club team.

Tour 3 was the culmination of what we had worked for. Everyone felt the confidence from Tour 2 and we qualified for another semi, against Clapham for the third time. They won again, as they did a lot last year. However, we felt closer to them than ever before. We went into the third place game and, yet again, met GB U23, finally defeating them and earning our spot as the third best team in the UK.

Unless something totally unexpected was to happen at XEUCF, we had secured the third UK spot at WUCC 2014, something that we had not thought about before the Tour season. Everyone was enthused for the second half of the season and the collective mood was buoyant, a mood that only improved when the club dominated Midlands Club Regionals and sent two teams to Nationals, another key objective.

However, around this time attendances at training dropped. In the weeks preceding Nationals, not enough players came to sessions and unfortunately that showed in Southampton. After such a successful year it was a huge blow to finish seventh at the last and biggest



tournament of the season, missing out on XEUCF by one place courtesy of Ka-Pow!

Ultimately, EMO 2013 was a success. We surpassed our expectations and qualified for the biggest tournament in Club Ultimate. That being said, the disappointing conclusion to the season takes some of the shine off that achievement. However you evaluate the year, lessons have been learned and will be applied ahead of the most important season in the club's history.

"Last season didn't end the way we wanted it to," said new EMO President Dave Povey. "Despite that, this season we will be competing at the World Championships in Italy. We realise the value of that third-ranked UK spot and we will be doing our utmost to compete at that level. This isn't a chance that comes along often and we don't intend to waste it."

Sean Colfer



Chevron v Emo Tour 3 © Andy Moss

Arctic wolf

James Wolverson, U23 player and Arctic coach

This year, U23 player James Wolverson was part of the Great Britain Under 17 (GB U17) Open coaching team that won Gold at the Junior European Championships. Joe Wyatt, Director of Junior Ultimate, sat down with him to discuss his journey from junior player to junior coach.

Where and why did you pick up that first disc?

I first started playing at school in November 2007. My geography teacher was Andy Vaughan and he kept on asking me when I was going to give it a go. I played most sports at school, but Frisbee didn't really appeal to me much. A few of my mates played Frisbee and one Friday I decided to go along to an Arctic training (the Arthur Terry School Junior Team) and see what it was all about. While at the training, Vaughan invited me to play an indoor tournament that weekend and, with no football fixture that week, I decided to go along. I spent most of the weekend running around clueless, but it was a good laugh.

How have you gone from there to a GB U23 player and Arctic coach?

I think one of the main reasons for me carrying on playing was opportunity. The opportunity to represent your country is obviously appealing, and I was lucky enough to make the U17s squad in my first year of playing. From then on I strived to achieve more, and making the team for the following year became one of my goals. Another reason is friends – you go to tournaments because your mates are going to be there and it's fun to compete against them. In terms of becoming the coach for Arctic, even once I had finished school I would return on Fridays to help Vaughan out – encouraging new players and sharing experiences with Arctic players. Through playing with GB



you learn a lot, so you want to take this experience back to your club because you want to help develop club players. Frisbee has grown a lot at my secondary school and when Vaughan left, teachers and parents asked if I would take over as coach, to ensure Arctic's continuation.

What are the key things that helped you on your journey?

As a player I think it's that competitive drive. When I first started playing, my core group of friends were also quite competitive and we aimed to become better players. I think it helped that it was a new sport so you're keen to go out and practice; having people around you who feel the same way means you can push each other to become better. I think another key aspect is the role of coaches, both at Arctic and GB. They are role models, encouraging you to continue to improve and to return to aid the development at your clubs.

What is it like to be a young coach? What do you get out of it?

I think an advantage of being young, especially when coaching the juniors,

is that you can build a certain rapport with the players. Going into coaching GB U17s this year, I was a bit sceptical as to whether I would be respected as much as other coaches. This wasn't the case at all, and I think playing for the U23s team helped, as the U17s were able to see more of me as a player. There were times at Europeans when the U17s were behind in games and I begin to doubt whether I was experienced enough or had done enough as a coach, but luckily the ideas we had worked. We battled through in those games and finished the tournament undefeated. As for what do I get out of it, I think it's the same for a lot of coaches; seeing the progress your team and players make and, obviously, a gold medal isn't too bad either.

What are the biggest things you have noticed from being a player on the field to being a coach?

I think the biggest thing is the way I interpret the game – I have started to see things from a different perspective both on and off the field.

What advice would you give a player looking to coach juniors?

I would say to get in contact with a coach of a junior team and offer to help out so you can grasp the differences in the game between junior and senior level, and get an idea of how it is coached. While playing GB U20s I helped out at U17s trainings, then in the year after finishing U20s I helped out in the run up to the World Junior Ultimate Championship and ended up going out to the tournament.

Similarly what advice would you give junior players reading this?

To always look to improve their game and for those who can, to take the experience they have gained from playing in high level teams like GB back to their clubs, to try and help their coaches in the development of their club and future players as much as possible.

Joe Wyatt

U23 Mixed

In the summer of 2012, hundreds of Ultimate players applied to be a part of the Great Britain squads heading to Toronto for the Under 23 World Championships. In total, 14 boys and 11 girls were selected to represent GB as part of the mixed squad, and we were immediately put through our paces with a grueling fitness regime and intense training sessions.

At the start, the bad weather in the winter months caused havoc. In January, after driving through treacherous conditions, the team arrived to find out that we would be shoveling snow off the pitches before any training could take place. But we gritted it out.

After several months of training as a team, coach Nick White asked us if we wanted to enter Mixed Tour as a team, as it would be quite a good level for us. We decided together that we would enter all of the Mixed Tour events – a decision that would prove incredibly beneficial for us in the run up to Toronto.

Prior to the 2013 Tour season, several players had never competed in the top 20. As the seedings were eventually released for Mixed Tour 1, many scoffed at the fact that the squad was automatically seeded 17th.

We wanted to prove them wrong, but knew our work was cut out for us! After some hard-fought games, particularly a sudden-death win against Light & Dark, we topped the pool, eventually finishing in 19th place.

Mixed Tour 2 had its highs and lows, including a valuable lesson for us. We started Sunday in 14th place, playing against Scarecrew. We took advantage of their slow start and gained a massive 13-5 lead. However, Scarecrew came back and punished us for poor offence and a laidback temperament – to beat us in sudden death 15-14. Although most of us (even now) think about it as a game we'd rather forget, we learned

the value of never getting complacent; without this eye-opening experience, we would have struggled to cope with the pressure at Worlds.

Due to exams, we were several players down at Mixed Tour 3. Even so, the team dug deep against previous rivals BAF and Scarecrew, and we ironed out mistakes that had been made at previous tournaments. As a result, our confidence grew, and after finishing 20th, we knew what we had to do in the run up to Worlds.

Our pre-tournament training in Toronto itself was an interesting mix of throwing, games of mini, and day trips to Wild Water Kingdom to ruin everyone else's time on the lazy river. And then it was time to play...

Our group consisted of USA, Australia, Colombia, Chinese Taipei and Venezuela. Throughout Mixed Tour, it had always taken a few games for our play to resemble that of a GB team; fortunately, we managed to break this trend in our first game against

Colombia, and open our weekend with a textbook pull play. The game was almost entirely made up of runs of scoring for each team, and we simply managed to pull off more to win 14-11.

In the evening, we were given the opportunity of a show game against Australia, which was streamed online. Perhaps it was the pressure of the crowd or the pressure of the camera, but we lost all the consistency from our first game. Aided by our numerous drops and miscommunications,



Tomiooka Ryota

Tom Cartwright

Japan v GB Under 23 World Championships © Nancy Rawlings 2013



Rachael Dean

Canada v GB Under 23 World Championships © Nancy Rawlings 2013

Australia took the half 9-3. Credit in this game should go to the D-line, who decided they'd had enough of watching the O-line struggle and carried us through the second half. Despite a late comeback, the final score was GB 13-17 Australia.

Our next game was against Chinese Taipei; we had been warned of their fast breaks and knifelike hucks. The game itself was sloppy as we faced our first bit of wind since arriving. At 9-9, a 32 minute, sudden-death point, with multiple scoring opportunities for both teams ended with a big layout from Cam Burgess for our first sudden-death win of the tournament.

Later that day we got our chance against the eventual world champions, USA. The Americans put on a consummate display of Ultimate, and despite our first goal resulting in

a pitch invasion that included most of GB U23 Open, we never really got going. Final score GB 3-17 USA.

Our final group game was against one of the big surprises of the tournament, Venezuela. Due to unknown difficulties, they were forced to combine their open and women's teams to form a single mixed team. We greatly underestimated them, and they made us pay. Final score GB 4-17 Venezuela.

We finished the group stage with two wins and three losses meaning we missed out on the crossovers for the top half. We'll sum up our final games:

GB 14-15 Austria: It took us too long to get used to Austria's zone



Natalie Rae

Alexandra Semproni

Australia v GB Under 23 World Championships © Nancy Rawlings 2013

GB 13-12 Germany: Robert's game-winning assist was completely calculated (anyone that says otherwise is a liar)

GB 8-15 Ireland: Ireland outclassed us with both their deep and under game

GB 12-9 Australia: This rematch showed that we were always good enough to beat Australia; we took an early lead and never looked like losing!

We ended in 7th place and held our seed. As with any tournament, there were moments of both stellar play and disappointing mistakes. That said, we both loved our time playing for GB and would recommend it to anyone who's even just considering it.

Sarah Harrison & Robert Coddington

GB Results

U23 World Championship (Toronto, Canada)

Open – 5th
Women's – 6th
Mixed – 7th

U20 European Youth Ultimate Championship (Cologne, Germany)

Open – 4th
Women's – 7th

U17 European Youth Ultimate Championship (Cologne, Germany)

Open – 1st
Women's – 3rd

Jabba the Huck



Amy Moffat

Beth Mulligan



Jabba the Huck v Speedy Handlers Mixed Tour 3 © Graham Bailey 2013 grahambaileyphotography.com

When Jabba the Huck was the only club to sign up with three teams for Mixed All-Ireland's last May, we were excited by the prospect of bringing so many players to the ever-growing Irish Ultimate scene. But by taking home first place, we realised that our club not only has the numbers, but also the dedication and potential to bring fierce competition to the mixed Ultimate community both at home and abroad.

Based in Dublin, Jabba has over 40 dedicated team members ready to claim a tournament win wherever possible – not to mention the other 40 or so who show up every now and again for a tournament or training session. With less than 20 clubs registered in Ireland –and only one other club (Cork) big enough to field teams in Mixed, Open and Women's divisions – we look forward to traveling abroad for some tough competition against unknown teams.

The UK Mixed Tour is a perfect opportunity for us with its close proximity and easy, affordable travel. A quick weekend away gives us the chance to play a completely different game of Ultimate: we don't know all the teams we'll be up against, aren't already familiar with their tactics, and must rely solely on our strengths as a solid team. This provides a team-building experience we just don't get at home – it takes much more of a group effort to play against a team you've never heard of than one you see at every tournament. Not to mention that at the heart of all our efforts, we're still Irish, and always up for a bit of *craic* after the matches with some old and new friends.

Alternatively, Jabba (and in fact most Irish teams) love seeing foreign teams register for Irish tournaments. Last year, The Siege of Limerick included players from Glasgow, Sussex, Amsterdam, Belgium and Germany – an excellent turnout for a February Open/Women's tournament. This

year, Ireland is hosting a brand new Mixed tournament, The Golden Keg, which we really hope draws in some new European faces. Irish teams travel all over the continent and make great friends with teams everywhere, so we're hoping to return the hospitality by hosting them in Dublin for a weekend in July. More details are yet to come, but the coordinators have big plans to make The Golden Keg a soon-to-be regular stop on the summer Ultimate circuit.

We can't speak for other clubs, but those of us in Jabba cannot wait to see who and what we'll encounter next year. We're looking forward to retaining our Mixed All-Ireland's trophy for the third year in a row, traveling to the UK for a few Tours and possibly to Europe for a summer tournament, and welcoming teams from abroad to our brand new Golden Keg tourney as well as Siege. There's going to be some intense training come January!

Kate Foley



Ian Fox

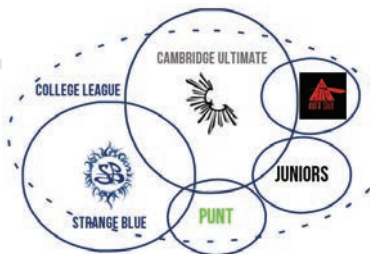
Mixed Tour 3 © Graham Bailey

Cambridge

Cambridge Ultimate stormed up the seedings this year, finishing 2nd at both Mixed Tour and Mixed Nationals and 5th at xEUCF. We asked their captain, Nick Wong, to tell us about their season.

We're lucky to have a pretty big Ultimate community in Cambridge which is made up of several different groups. There is a college league which caters for around 200 casual players and beginners (and some less casual players). This then feeds the more committed players into the student teams of both Cambridge and Anglia Ruskin Universities. There is also a vibrant community of non-student Ultimate players, as many alumni have stayed on in Cambridge to work. The Club team is able to draw people from all of these pools and, therefore, has quite a diverse composition.

In the past, the Club team was called Strange Blue, but as this was also the name of the Cambridge University student team, it didn't represent the diversity of the Club team, and left everyone a bit confused! So last season we rebranded as Cambridge Ultimate (or "Cult" for short) to make it clearer. We still wanted to operate as one big club, however, and there is a great Venn diagram that explains it all (we're quite a geeky bunch).



Before this year, we hadn't really prioritised Mixed – there were no official trainings or trials before the Mixed Tour. Things changed a bit in 2012 with Graham "Nimble" Wilson

taking charge, but the Mixed Tour was still used more as a warm-up to the Open and Women's season.

I wanted to do things a little differently this season and build something the local community could really be proud of and aspire to. For a long time, we, as a city, had grown accustomed to losing our best players each year as they decided to commute to other teams to get the chance to compete at a higher level. I wanted to raise the standard and it had to be good enough to retain our best players. We started having Mixed squad trainings which were more exclusive than before, and I played the "bad guy" to try to get everyone to take it more seriously. Instead of just nagging people from Monday to Friday (I'm a teacher), I got to do that at the weekend too. Oh, joy – but it was effective!

Two final pieces of the puzzle then fell into place: we recruited from our alumni to strengthen the team and, the week before our first practice, former GB Women's player Niamh Delaney moved to Cambridge.

Although I've always wanted to take Cambridge to Euros and Worlds, we didn't have the pedigree in the past to show that we were contenders. This season, the plan was to have a good Tour season and build some momentum that would show that we were serious, and hence get people to commit to Mixed ahead of their Women's and Open teams. I didn't ask for commitment at the beginning because there was yet to be a high-achieving team to buy into.

We finished 9th at Mixed Tour 1 and 3rd at both Mixed Tour 2 and 3. Taking out the World Games team from the Tour standings, we finished the Tour season 2nd overall. This was a huge jump from finishing 18th and 7th overall as Strange Blue in 2011 and 2012 respectively, and also an improvement within the season itself.

Having Tour separate allowed us to make a decision as a team to prioritise Mixed and to further strengthen between Tour and Nationals. In the end, Mixed Nationals went pretty well. We came 2nd, qualifying for XEUCF (where we finished 5th, securing us a place at Worlds), although we came up frustratingly short in our two games against Bear Cavalry.

Part of our selection criteria this year was the willingness of players to always put the team first and I'm proud of everyone for consistently doing this. However, I think we slightly struggled (at Nationals in particular) with chemistry because we added a few new players and it was hard to ensure well-attended practices over the summer holidays.

I think it also caused the team to feel a bit separated from the rest of the Ultimate community in Cambridge which is real shame and something I want to rectify next year.

I'm really looking forward to next season. As a captain, I think that while I did some things well, I made a fair number of mistakes and learnt a lot. Similarly, as a team we did some things well but also let ourselves down at times and have something to prove. With this season behind us and Worlds ahead, I'm looking forward to building a better and stronger team dynamic and I'm confident that it will take us to some really exciting places.

Nick Wong



Cambridge Mixed Tour 3 © Andy Moss 2013

Thought for the day

Morality and Spirit of the Game

This article was previously published on Understanding Ultimate: <http://understandingultimate.wordpress.com>. Reprinted and adapted with permission.

What's your natural reaction to someone else doing something to hurt you? Do you cheerfully turn the other cheek? Or do you expect to see them suffer some consequences?

There are all sorts of very good cultural and evolutionary reasons why you probably think punishing transgressions is necessary. But in Ultimate, I strongly believe punishments can be counter-productive. I don't necessarily expect everyone to agree, but hopefully I'll present an interesting way of looking at it that you may not have considered.

It's not really another argument about referees/observers/self-officiation. Regardless of who makes the calls, there is a question of what punishment should result from a foul.

This will probably seem a little off-topic for a while, but bear with me...

The psychologist Dan Ariely and his colleagues performed a wonderful experiment selling chocolate truffles on American college campuses. They varied the price, and studied the behaviour of their 'customers'. At 10 cents each, they sold a bunch of chocolates. At 5 cents, they sold twice as many – more people took some, and each individual took more. At 1 cent, they sold twice as many again.

But when they gave them away for free, they 'sold' fewer, even allowing for the fact that yet more individual people took some. Each person who took any took *far* fewer – and the majority took only one each.

The situation had moved from an economic one – "I have x money and y other things to buy, so I will buy z chocolates" – to a moral, social one – "People would think me greedy; I should leave some for others."

Rationally, there's almost no difference between 1 cent and free. At 1 cent, you

already ought to be considering your reputation or the enjoyment of others, because the economic cost is *tiny*. But, for the most part, you don't. You just buy chocolates. You look at the cost and the reward, and decide that you should buy as many as you want to eat.

No matter how small the cost, there is a psychological difference between that cost and *free*.

But what's all this got to do with Ultimate?

Well, in Ultimate throughout most of the world, there are no punishments. Zero. Zilch. Cheating is 'free'. Cheating





Tom Abrams

is unequivocally a moral issue, and social norms govern the behaviour on the pitch. If you've ever wondered why SOTG works, then this experiment may help to show you. It's not because we're all nice guys: it's because we've specifically made the reward/cost ratio *infinite*, and hence kept the whole thing in the moral realm.

There is no 'economic' cost whatsoever to cheating, and there's always a benefit. So whether it's nudging your guy on the mark at 1-all or hacking down a thrower on game point, the economic calculation is the same – of *course* you should do it! There's no cost. Every opportunity to cheat has exactly the same reward per unit cost – infinity! So economically we should cheat *all the time*. But we can't cheat all the time, because the game wouldn't work, and no one would ever play.

In Ultimate, economics without morality gives no useful guide to behaviour, because its recommendation – cheat all the time – is unworkable.

Instead, our behaviour has to be governed by social norms: by what is considered reasonable, by thoughts of our reputation, by concern for others. This *works*. If you put people in a situation where their decisions are explicitly social and moral, they will care about how others see them.

If you add in punishments, they might not. There is then an explicit calculation to be made about whether it's worth it, and they won't see it in moral terms. That might not be rational: just as a 1 cent charge shouldn't make you selfish, the possibility of a Team Misconduct Foul (TMF) for double-teaming shouldn't make you a cheat. But it just might, if you buy the analogy I'm making between the cost of spending cash and the 'cost' of a punishment in Ultimate. And once we take morality out of it, even severe punishments (like a penalty kick *plus* a red card in football) are sometimes worth it – as at the 2010 World Cup when Luis Suarez illegally prevented a certain goal in the last minute, in the hope that the resulting penalty would be missed. It was missed, and his team won the game.

Punishments will not eradicate bad behaviour; they will merely control some of its excesses. And the price we pay for this is that those same punishments *legitimise* any behaviour that is 'worth it'. They turn the cheat-or-not decision into an economic one, and we know how humans respond to incentives in those situations.

There are more experiments to show this. In the book *Freakonomics*, the authors famously discuss the case of the Israeli day care centre that was fed up with children being collected late. They instituted a fee

for lateness, and the number of late parents immediately *increased*. The parents no longer felt guilty, and they were happy to pay a small fine for the flexibility of leaving their kids there longer.

One response to this is simply to increase the fine, which would of course work until the local billionaire decided he couldn't be bothered to pick up his child. But the point is not about the size of the fine – the point is that the fine did not *add* to the existing social pressures; it *replaced* them. It moved from the moral to the economic. A larger fine might do a better job of replacing the moral pressure, but that won't change the fact that morality, guilt or social pressure have disappeared from the equation.

Charging a 'late fee' *legitimised* lateness. It gave it a definite, measurable cost, and allowed parents to make an economic decision rather than a moral one. Psychologically, it gave people a possible answer to the question "Why did you do that?" which is not tied to their moral failings.

None of us like to admit to ourselves that we're filthy cheats, though we may often feel a desire to cheat. Our self-image is important, and if we can find some way to describe our actions that doesn't hurt our self-image, then we're far more likely to cheat. You might steal from the till because

the boss mistreats you, or you might drive too close to cyclists because you don't believe they should be allowed on the road. You might avoid throwing to women because they're not good enough, not because you're a terrible misogynist (oh no, not you, never...)

Very few people act like jerks in the full knowledge that they're being jerks: they find a way to lie to themselves about their motives. Economic arguments offer us that excuse we're looking for. Instead of saying, "Yes, I'm a filthy cheat!" we can say, "Look how clever I am, I got a net benefit out of this! The rules are stupid, man, and I beat them. I win." Punishments in Ultimate will allow people to think that way. That's not rational, but it is human.

Just as all players have a responsibility not to take the easy option (fouling), rule-makers have a responsibility not to take the easy option (punishments). It's often very tempting to respond to unwanted situations by creating disincentives, but doing so may reframe the question in economic rather than moral terms. As Ariely put it, "Policy makers should be careful not to add market norms that could undermine the social norms."

I personally don't believe that adding small punishments for minor offences (e.g. TMFs in the US or, even more so, yardage penalties in professional Ultimate) will remove those offences; it may make them worse, as it replaces the social pressure.

Either we stick to the principle of the do-over and *never* punish, or some people will start to look at the whole game in economic terms. People are very, very bad at mixing economic and moral incentives: the economic point of view will tend to win if you give it even half a chance.

Let's not give it that chance.

Benji Heywood

Grand Nationals

Combined UKU Nationals: Why run a multi division tournament?

In 2012, following a comprehensive consultation with its members, UK Ultimate introduced a Mixed division into the National Championships running alongside the Open and Women's Divisions. In 2013 this was repeated.

We know this is not universally popular; but we also know that opinion is divided. It is one of those "you can't please all of the people, all of the time" situations.

So, why run a combined Nationals?

- Since xEUCF 2009, the European Championship Series Committee has been discussing the permanent inclusion of the mixed division in the European Ultimate Championship Series (EUCS); and it was provisionally planned that this would happen from 2013 onwards. Nationals is the qualification competition for teams going on to compete in EUCF in both the Open and Women's divisions. Adding a Mixed division to UK Nationals provides a robust and future proof qualification process for EUCF where there is a high level of consistency in the make-up of teams that qualify and actually compete at EUCF. The point also holds to some extent for WUCC. It makes sense that part of the WUCC-qualification process in Mixed would be targeted at teams that put Mixed first.

- Prior to this change in 2012, Mixed Nationals had all but stopped. The

competition calendar – especially including international events – is congested, and in our view, it is not realistic to think that a separate Mixed Nationals could be squeezed in successfully.

- We want Nationals to look and feel different to the Tour and other events. Running multiple divisions (e.g. adding Mixed and Masters) is part of that differentiation. It feels like a natural progression to open up what should be our "flagship" event to the other club divisions.

- The UK season is structured so that players are able to play Mixed in the spring and then Open/Women's in the summer. That has been very successful and popular – but many Mixed players would also like a National-level competition that exists for those players that prioritise that division above the others. Running combined Nationals and separate Tours allows us to provide for both camps.

For our current population of players we are right on the cusp of whether or not this structure is viable. We will continue to monitor the situation carefully – and in particular the impact on the Women's division: both at Nationals, and in general. But for now we believe that, overall, the pros outweigh the cons.

Jim Hancox and Si Hill, on behalf of the UKU Competition Committee



Player perspectives - thoughts on a combined Nationals

My personal highlight of Women's Nationals was playing in the final. We had a great team performance and I always play better in front of a crowd!

I actually fully support Mixed Nationals at the same time as Women's and Open Nationals. Ultimate is such a great co-ed sport that it is good to finally see the Mixed game being developed and elevated to the same status as the other two big divisions in the UK. I believe that it gives more women an opportunity to play top-level ultimate, and I think the approach paid off in UK results at Euros. I believe that there is a place for both the Mixed and Women's divisions to support the growth of female players in the UK.

Cassie Seaborn, Iceni

Playing for LeedsLeedsLeeds Women as a first time Tour player it was great to see the high standard of play at Nationals from women demonstrating something to aspire to. A personal highlight at Nationals was the game against SYC, which was hard fought and closely contested, with every player stepping it up.

Claire Taylor, LeedsLeedsLeeds

Dragon Knights had a wonderful time at Nationals. We entered not really expecting to qualify, but as there were so few teams, it was fun to be pitted against the top teams, and the opportunity to play against the very best women in Ultimate Frisbee was inspirational.

It would certainly be beneficial to women's Ultimate if Women's Nationals was on a different weekend

than Mixed: I know our team didn't have all the players we wanted because some were playing Mixed, but it would be great to see more teams entered.

Taking a team to Nationals has been the highlight of my Ultimate career, and as a developing team, we hope to pose more of a threat next year!

Heather Mynott, Dragon Knights

Nationals was the event SYC had been waiting for. Tour was great, but Nationals is a place that we could show how hard we had worked and how united and competitive we had become. SYC came third overall which was a good achievement; however, if you think that it was third out of only six, it no longer sounds so impressive.

Within women's Ultimate there seems to be a sense that when Nationals comes around many teams give up; the winners are the same so why bother? But this attitude is preventing this division from being truly competitive. More women's teams need to enter Nationals and challenge those top teams.

Anna Trebble, SYC

Nice Bristols went into Nationals this year looking to replicate the success of last year by qualifying for Euros and earning a place in the final.

As one of the newer players, I relished the opportunity to play in my first Nationals final and the chance to match up against the best players in the country over a weekend of high quality, gritty ultimate. Having scorers on the sideline totting up the stats adds an extra element that you don't get at Tour, as does games being filmed and bigger hype around the finals.

With a few of us returning from World U23s in Toronto, it was great to be able to bring everything we'd learned back to the club and make the most of the connections we'd built. We'd love to see even more ladies teams at Nationals next year!

Rachel Dean, Nice Bristols



Icenil v UdeCologne XEUCF © Graham Bailey 2013 grahambaileyphotography.com

At Nationals, Curve was an amalgamation of players from Punt, Brighton, Curve and other pick-ups. Many of us wanted to play at Nationals – and our women's teams had qualified; however, the presence of Mixed at Nationals meant each team had lost players, so entering as Punt or Seven Sisters was not viable.

Everyone who played 'Curve' enjoyed Nationals. Our ethos was to do the simple things correctly, and to remember that with a bit of determination and encouragement, we could hold our own 'one-on-one' against individuals on other teams.

I find it frustrating that after awesome Tour seasons for both Punt and Seven Sisters, this could not be carried into Nationals. However, with Women's and Mixed divisions at XEUCF, if Punt (Women's) and Cambridge (Mixed) had each qualified separately, it would just have delayed the issue for women players who had to choose who to play for.

Chloë DalGLISH, Curve

I chose to play Mixed Nationals so that I could play with my husband Rich. We have been trying to play top-level Ultimate together since 2010... but that has been scuppered due to various injuries. Nationals was the only real opportunity where we could aim for Worlds together.

However, it was an incredibly tough decision and it was one of the hardest things to watch the LLeeds women play and not be there with them. So I would generally advocate Mixed and Women's Nationals being separate events until there is enough strength in depth in the Women's division that it isn't weakened by removing the middle strand of the division.

KJ Boardman-Hims, Cambridge

With Blink's Women's Tour finishes not looking great, most of the team assumed we would not be entering and made other plans for the weekend. I chose to play Nationals with my Mixed team – my favourite part was in the penultimate point of the last game, where we called four women and I pulled down a huck from Mary Hoyes to take it to sudden death.

If we do keep Mixed, Women's and Open all at the same event, I really think the Mixed team spots should be allocated at the end of the Mixed Tours so players can commit to one division well in advance. So many teams this season were awarded places at Nationals but didn't go, which is a real shame.

Hani Pendlebury, ABH

I played Mixed this year at Nationals for practical reasons – we wanted to qualify for Europeans and Worlds. My highlights were gelling as a team over the weekend... and winning obviously!

I think it is a shame that both the Mixed and Women's divisions are made weaker by being at the same time, but I don't have a problem with picking one over the other. However, it was a real shame that the Mixed final at Nationals was overlooked – no spectators, and we weren't even on the show pitch. Hopefully this is something that can be improved in the future.

Hanna John, Bear Cavalry

Nationals with Herd was a grand weekend of hard Mixed Ultimate. The opposition was just as challenging as we'd hoped, but we loved the battles and the fact that we had to find our best game to stay in the top 6. That said, as a girl who loves to play as much Ultimate as possible (and since Women's and Mixed are such different versions of Ultimate), I am gutted that we have to choose between the two. I know there would have been as many team and personal highlights playing Nationals with the Seven Sisters, and that given the chance to play with both teams, I'd glow looking back at both weekends.

Steph Gillick, Thundering Herd

Mixed feelings

Where did all the women go?

Over the many years that I've been competing at Tour and Nationals with LeedsLeedsLeeds, there has been a constant emphasis on the growth of women's Ultimate in the UK. And things have certainly moved on since the early days, with seven teams at Tour 1 back in 2004, compared to this year's twenty-two. Nationals has always been less-well attended than tour events (with the highest turnout generally at Tour 1), peaking at fifteen teams in 2009.

However, despite having the joint highest Tour 1 event this year, attendance at Women's Nationals dropped to a low of six teams. I speculate that there are several reasons (some more contentious than others) that could account for the drop-off over the last four years.

Tour will always have more entries, as there are some teams who never plan on attending Nationals. Yaka (France) historically enter Tour 1, but are ineligible to compete at UK Nationals. Teams who split their squad for Tour, such as Iceni and Iceni Savage, tend to come back together as one team for Nationals.

The choice of holding a two-day event over a three-day weekend has also been cited as off-putting by some who would prefer to be able to make full use of the bank holiday rather than play yet another Ultimate event (this was the case for some of the players on ROBOT, many of whom have families).

It is undeniable that running Women's Nationals alongside Mixed Nationals is a difficulty for women's attendance, since players who belong to clubs in both divisions are forced to prioritise one over the other. For any Mixed club to be able to field a team, they have to get their women from somewhere; numerous players from teams such



as Punt, Relentless, Jest Ridiculous, Crown Jewels and Swift, for various reasons, chose Mixed this year.

I believe that the loss of women to Mixed teams actually has a bigger effect than is initially noticed. The majority of the country's top women are dedicated to their Women's teams (all ladies on this year's GB World Games squad played for their Tour team at Nationals, for example).

Many of the women who choose to compete for their Mixed teams are from the next 'tier' – teams that could normally be expected to finish in the 5-10 bracket at Tour. The result then is that those teams who remain possible Nationals attendants are generally from the lower half of the Tour rankings. This year, for example, there was a very big gap in the scores between the top four teams – Iceni,

Nice Bristols, SYC and LLLeeds – and the remaining two teams – Curve and Dragon Knights (for instance, while LLLeeds came 4th at Nationals, they still beat the two teams below them 15-1 and 15-0).

With that in mind, I contend that it is unsurprising that many of the remaining Women's teams chose not to attend Nationals. While the venue in Southampton is outstanding, it's still a huge distance for most teams to travel for the nature of the competition that it would entail. Women's teams from the North and Scotland were noticeably absent from Nationals; while some may have played Mixed with the intention of qualifying for Europeans, it's possible the remaining women saved themselves the cost of and hours of travelling, and freed up a full bank holiday weekend. The drive from Leeds to Southampton is six hours

each way – that's off-putting enough even when we know that competing at Nationals and qualification for Euros have been the aims of the season. It would be even more disheartening to be travelling so far simply for the joy of the competition.

Therefore, one solution to increase the number of Women's teams at Nationals solutions could be to move Women's Nationals (at least) to a more central and accessible location, or avoid scheduling the event on a bank holiday.

In order to encourage more teams to attend, we need to understand why teams who enter Tour chose not to enter Nationals. Much of this article is speculation; the best way would be to hear from each team – so let's get the chat going!

Linz Wilkinson



Devon v Fire Tour 2 © Pete Rawlinson 2013 facebook/ PeteRawlinsonPhotography

B Tour to Bordeaux

The Devon story

As the dust settled on a beautiful weekend at Open Tour 1 in St Albans, and hundreds of players traipsed away from the fields tired and sore, some teams were delighted and buzzing from their play while others were downtrodden and frustrated. One of those downtrodden teams was Devon Ultimate. For the first time in years, Devon would enter Tour 2 outside of the top 16 – outside of A Tour.

With losses to Bear Cavalry, Rebel and Blue Arse Flies, Devon looked a shadow of the team who finished in the top eight at Nationals in 2012 and who, in 2010, had narrowly lost to Fire in the game to go. Fast-forward to Nationals 2013 and Devon were flooding the pitch in green as they beat Fire to take top four and a place at the elite division of the Extended European Ultimate Championship Finals (XEUCF). So what changed? How did a team go from A Tour relegation to a strong Euros showing in one season with no additional players, no additional training sessions, no new kit and no change of captain?

The eighth man

It's no secret that the green machine is a team of emotions. When we're up, it's like we're a national team playing a beginners team: all confidence (sometimes arrogance)

and athleticism. When we're down, it's like we're a beginners team playing a national team: hopeless, frustrated and angry. The first battle we faced was to change this and channel the emotions into something useful. The best teams have eight players playing; the seven on the pitch and the eighth on the sideline. The Devon captains dragged that eighth player into being. No more negativity, no more frustration, just friends who picked each other up and had each other's backs. With a new ethos, the crippling frustrations and negativity that Devon suffered were a thing of the past.

Stubbornness

Devon's inability to stick to a game plan was one of its greatest strengths as well as one of its greatest weaknesses. Like a fantasy football manager we chopped and changed player roles, strategies, tactics, ideals and ideas. If something didn't work we mixed it up randomly; it was trial and error. But no more. By creating structured O and D lines, we could channel the strengths of each player to create cohesion while remaining dynamic. This gave us stability when things got tough but also gave us consistency to maintain a lead when things were going well. To some teams this is second nature, but to Devon it took time.

Knowing the road not just the destination

Let me give you a narrative here to help you understand my next point. At university my coach announced our goal for the year at the first training session – to finish the season with BUCS points. The previous season we'd finished bottom of Division 2. As you might agree, it was an unrealistic goal that was seemingly unobtainable the instant that it was set and it added unnecessary pressure to the mix. In addition to this "out of reach" goal, the coach had no plan for how we would achieve it, which added to the ridiculousness of it all. Yes, I believe you should aim high; but if you're aiming to be Prime Minister, then you're probably better off running for MP for Woking first, and if you wind up Prime Minister, then good for you. The moral of the story is that goals shouldn't be out of reach; otherwise it is difficult to have faith in them from the start.

Back to Devon...

Devon's goal was to make Euros, and we knew we could do it because we mapped every step: we had a plan. Take each step as it comes: first points, then halves, then games, then tournaments. Win the first point and tick it off, then say to yourself, "Now we win the next point. From scratch. Nil-nil." Do this until you find yourself

with eight points and take the game to the half. Then you do it again, take the next half, and before you know it you've won the game. It sounds simple, but when you're 9-3 up against Chevron you can easily forget to do this and throw that lead away. We know.

These three changes in psyche, team dynamic, and ethos gave Devon the grounding needed to channel the athleticism, youth and fight into winning the big games. Sadly, Devon's performance at XEUCF wasn't as successful as hoped, including a loss to Fire. That said, we only lost to CUSB by two—and led for a lot of the game—we beat Prague Devils, and we pushed every team (bar one) as close as possible, and in doing so showed that Devon's place at the tournament was deserved. The best looking team in Ultimate kept up with the big boys of the continent and every Devon player came home with his head held high.

It may not have been the happy ending we hoped for, but I don't think anyone in the club will forget XEUCF, the sudden death win against Fire at Tour 2 this season, and the same at Nationals. We ironed out the creases and we got rid of our demons. Now to carry that into next year and cement Devon as a team to be feared: no longer just a banana skin.

James Bunting

Burnt fingers

Captaining a team in flux and the value of proper goal setting

When Paul “Sarje” Sarjeant and I put ourselves forward to be captains of Fire of London last year, I don’t think either of us really knew what we were letting ourselves in for. Fire 1 was coming off the back of one of its most successful seasons in recent years, with a second place finish at UK Nationals and ranking 6th in Europe. On one hand we were excited, motivated, and keen to push the team to new heights. On the other, we were both new to captaincy, and were losing nine top-end first team players going into 2013.

Our reasons for running for captains will probably sound familiar to anyone else who has done it. We were dedicated to our team, had ideas of how to improve it and felt like it was the next step in our careers.

There’s no denying that captaining a team is incredibly rewarding and helps you see the game in new ways. You’re suddenly required to understand the game from every player’s position, not just your own. In most clubs you have to take on the responsibilities of decision-making, line calling and even designing plays. It’d be easy to shy away from undertaking something like this, but you can start to get so much more out of your game by tackling the challenge of captaincy. You’ll become the person people turn to when they have questions; you’ll be the one encouraging better spirit, and caring more than ever about your performances.

At the beginning of the 2013 season, Sarje and I thought it was going to be a natural continuation from the previous year. I saw the team’s progress and development as an extension of my own, and could only see one direction: up. We’d achieved so much the year before, and that was surely going to act as our foundation. This misconception was one of the biggest problems in how the team, and we as captains, perceived our season’s



success. Finishing 6th or 7th was a failure; losing to Bad Skid in sudden death was a failure; “we should have been in the final”; “we should have won that game”. The ‘should have’s’ were endless.

People talk of managing expectations, but no one on our team was doing that, and consequently our expectations were wildly inaccurate.

We learnt that the impact this perception has during games is huge. We imploded on several occasions, and because no one could quite grasp

what was happening, we were unable to stop the rot. We hadn’t been there before, and it *shouldn’t* have been happening. So why was it? It didn’t come down to our plays, or how hard we played on D; it came down to the little things. It came down to getting broken too easily; it came down to trailing our man; it came down to not valuing disc possession on offense.

Had we properly appraised our situation, these faults in our perception and expectation would never have been there. We would have realised that we needed to spend the

first half of the season gelling with our new teammates, working on fundamentals and putting the work in to get to where we were the year before. This is a common situation that university Ultimate players and captains will find themselves in. As players graduate, you need to find new talent to fill the gaps, or need to adapt your existing talent to a new system.

Every team needs a goal. If you’re at university it might be qualifying for – or even winning – Nationals. If you’re playing club it might be promotion to B Tour or winning World’s. It doesn’t

FIRE

matter which end of the spectrum you're at, you'll have a goal.

Fire 1's season goal was World's qualification, but we'd failed to properly address the work we were going to need to do to get there. As a team we were focussed on the end goal. We were playing with a sense of entitlement that we didn't deserve, a sense of arrogance no one should have. We thought we'd win because of the badge on our shirts.

This goal was one of our undoings. The problem is that while this goal can be a huge motivation for your team – it'll be what gets your players to the track or gym when there's a million other things they could be doing – it's not going to win you points, and it's not going to win you games. The solution is that you need to recognise this as an *outcome* goal. An outcome goal is the result of everything else you do; by the time you succeed or fail at reaching this goal, it's already too late. It's immutable and your players can't directly action anything to achieve it.

I can't count the times Sarje, I, or someone else said the words, "Guys, if we want to go to World's, we've got to win this game." I've learnt that these words are useless.

Instead of focussing on the outcome goal, you need to switch focus to what we called *process* goals. Process goals are about all the things you *can* influence, and the key to them is that they offer the chance to succeed and fail on a very regular basis. Succeeding and failing allows you to constantly improve. That's why we run drills: you get 20 chances to do the same thing. If you don't get it right first time, you adjust something so you do it right the next time. When you do succeed, you can make the goal a little harder.

For example, we had one process goal that was, "Each time my mark has the disc, I will make them pivot at

least once." This led to throwers being unable to take their first option. When we were doing that well, we moved it to "I will make them pivot at least twice." This was a small thing that each player could focus on during every point and work to improve. It's easily quantifiable, and you get many chances to succeed or fail each practice.

Some of these things may feel contrived or forced at first, but you'll notice your performances as a team improving as a result. You're no longer focussing on trying to win the game; you're focussing on the things that are going to win the next point. You should still be using this same thinking when you're winning, but absolutely when you're losing. If you're going to dig yourself out of a hole, the first thing you need to do is focus on the small things, and never on the score line.

This was something Fire 1 failed to do in the first half of the season. When we switched our focus, we got the results. At Nationals, we came from three points behind to beat EMO, and nearly managed the same against Chevron. Despite losing that semi-final, the determination we showed in doing the small things right was a huge reward for Sarje and me. It showed we'd started to come out the other side with a rebuilt team and with renewed passion.

When you start as a captain, you're following on from someone else's foundation. You're following on from what you know, and what you're used to. It's no great stretch to think that things will carry on in the same vein. This is a major trap. This kind of thinking breeds lethargy and complacency and allows bad habits to persist. Before every season you need to do a full assessment of what's going to be possible for your team that year. You never know – you could be the next captain of a team in flux, and how you set your goals may be

the difference in seeing your year as a success or failure.

After a domestic season that players could be forgiven for wanting to forget, we worked on the small things, and Fire 1 finished 9th at the Extended European Ultimate Championship Finals as the 3rd highest placed UK team, narrowly missing out on a top eight spot after a close loss to CUSB. I strongly believe that had we

recognised the position we were in, looked to build rather than tried to continue, and understood the value of processes over outcomes, that we might have found our end of season form much earlier. And who knows where we'd be now...

Alex Cragg



Competitive spirit

Is SOTG still important?



Applauding a great catch by the opposition is pretty damn good spirit

The UK impressed in a number of ways at the Extended European Ultimate Championship Finals (XEUCF) in 2013, not only placing first in all four divisions, but also winning spirit in three of them. Nice Bristols, Cambridge and Ka-Pow! each brought home a trophy.

Spirit of the Game (SOTG) divides the Ultimate community into those who play because of it, those who play in spite of it and those who are passionately indifferent. Regardless of your view, the Spirit rating process we go through during each tournament is a reflection of our ability to demonstrate rules knowledge, to play with fair-mindedness, within accepted levels of contact and to maintain the correct attitude when playing; it offers recognition that you are approaching the game in the same manner as your opponent.

How important is Spirit?

The XEUCF'13 Tournament Directors announced that some Spirit scores were not submitted and some were lost in the gale and that, therefore, the final scores may not have been a fair representation of how teams acquitted themselves; however, as both Ka-Pow! and Nice Bristols also won Spirit at UK Nationals this summer, I want to get each captain's opinion as a past Spirit winner.

Dave Pichler of Ka-Pow! said, "I think without recognition of fair play the sport collapses and what we know will vanish. The system isn't perfect but it's better than any other sport out there. Asking players to referee themselves means that a team is culpable for one individual's [actions]".

Nice Bristols's Jen Hart voiced a similar opinion on Spirit: "It was great to see such impressive Spirit trophies at Euros. We think it's important as times are changing – semi-pro leagues in the States etc. – to still lend

Spirit winners the recognition they deserve". Jen said that, for her, the objective isn't to go out to win Spirit – although teams should always look to improve their Spirit score – but that 'winning Spirit' "should be a bonus and well deserved recognition by the ultimate community".

How do you 'win Spirit'?

For Pichler, this was quite clear: "1. Know the rules. 2. Know you're not always innocent. 3. Enjoy yourself".

It should also be noted that the players on Cambridge, who won Spirit in the Mixed division, were all rules accredited before XEUCF, which may have, in some part, supported their Spirit result.

Jen also added: "It's important for people to remember just because you made a call, you can still decline it! Equally it's important to always allow the other player their chance to explain their version of events (and stay calm whilst they are doing so!)".

The SOTG Committee

The SOTG Committee is a group that works to support and protect SOTG and self-officiating. It's composed of Chair Wayne Davey and about ten players who roughly span the different levels of Ultimate. I was invited to join at the end of last season when Sion "Brummie" Scone stepped down. Previously the committee existed to make sure that the conversation was current but is now looking to work with the UKU to make sure that UK Ultimate is on message in regards to spirit and is part of the wider WFDF conversation.

If SOTG is seemingly alive and well, then why does the UK have a SOTG Committee and why is it taking such an interest in the Spirit scores of Tour events? The SOTG Committee has been reviewing Spirit scores

during the 2013 Tour season and communicating with team contacts if scores are repeatedly low. It has agreed some sanctions with the UKU for teams that continue to exhibit poor Spirit scores or fail to make adjustments following support from the SOTG Committee and the UKU.

It has been said that this review is refereeing by another name and therefore goes against what makes Ultimate unique. I favour the view that Ultimate is, in fact, refereed by the 14 players on the pitch but that, without any backing by a higher authority, those acting as referees are powerless. Without some sort of wider culpability and review, systemic failures in teams, clubs, or players could be missed.

Ultimate is becoming increasingly media-enabled, and although discussions around controversy and contested outcomes are great for fuelling community engagement, media outlets cannot be the only source for raising such issues. Although peer pressure to 'play right' will come from increased visibility, the SOTG Committee believes that there is still the need for some form of external support.

The SOTG Committee hopes that its involvement will reassure teams that filling out the Spirit sheet properly will have a greater impact than just awarding a team an extra prize at the end of the tournament. The aim is to inspire teams to address their own and their opponents' Spirit with greater thought and consideration.

The SOTG Committee continues to seek input from the Ultimate community and looks forward to continuing the conversation.

*Nick Roberts, Ka-Pow! 2013
On behalf of the SOTG Committee*

Water boy

Life as a Clapham rookie

This article marks the end of my first season playing with Clapham, which is certainly not something I envisioned writing a couple of years ago. In previous seasons I had played against Clapham only a few times and each time, the score-line had always been somewhat one-sided, despite there being only nine players on the opposition. I wasn't entirely sure what to expect: you can never really know what it is like to play for a team until you join.

To start at the beginning, we should talk about practices. These were fast paced and intense, always trying to make each one the best in Europe. Drills tended to focus around plays, positioning, but always with a bias towards breaking the mark and creating space. Punishments, mostly shuttles, were dished out lavishly for not being clinical. Training was not always as precise as you might expect (hence there were a lot of shuttles), but every drill is designed to be a challenge, such as being forced to throw through the mark, or working in a small space.

You may find this a little surprising, but at the start of the season I found that practices could be a little demoralising, and early on I lost confidence in my abilities. Personally, I can't stand being beaten up the line, getting point blocked or getting skied, and yet every training this would happen a multitude of times. Having said that, being thrown into the deep end is by far the fastest way to learn, and the team was incredibly supportive in providing all the feedback I needed to climb up the curve.

A second challenge for a new joiner was the length of the playbook. I lost count of how many formations, both offence and defence, we learnt and drilled this season. I was forced to resort to post-it notes all the way

around my computer screen, which at first impressed people at work who thought they were financial option payoff profiles, but had a good laugh at my expense when I told them what they really were.

One advantage Clapham has is a deep enough squad that gives the team the luxury to be able to cut top players who don't attend practice, something I realise is not an option for most teams. This certainly helped boost numbers at bi-weekly practices, although the team will be first to admit that attendance will need to improve next season.

Tournament attitude was a big change from teams I have previously played on. Instead of focusing just on the game in hand, every game was about the next level. The National's final was not about winning the game; it was about sending a message to teams in Europe. In the huddle of the XEUCF final, we discussed how the game was about sending a message to the world for next summer in Italy. The mindset provided the motivation and the challenge, which the team thrives off, but which doesn't diminish even when the score line is favourable.

International tournaments have also been a new experience for me this year, and having played at Paganello, U23 Open Worlds, Chesapeake Invite and XEUCF I can honestly say that I am hooked. The incredibly variety of playing styles means you are always having to adapt. For me, the thing that sets Clapham apart is the ability to learn midgame. Let me give an example: in America we were forced to learn an entirely new way of playing force-middle mid-game to combat the open under cuts by the top American teams that were proving impossible to cut out. Not only did the team pick this up instantly, but it was so successful that it became one of our most



frequent defensive calls of the year.

To sum it up, Clapham is incredibly rewarding to play for, and has been greatly supportive of all the new players who joined this season. It has

definitely been a steep learning curve and despite improving greatly this year, I feel like the journey has only just begun (apologies for the cliché).

Philip Garner

CU @ Chesapeake



Why I went to America for the weekend

This summer saw Clapham Ultimate (CU) travel over to the US for the sixth time as a club. While CU has always looked to be the best team in Europe, we have also set our aims higher; complacency is not acceptable. US tournaments offer the highest and most consistent levels of competition – in my opinion higher than that of World Clubs. The tournaments are a true testing ground for innovation in styles of play, individual skills, new talent and, most importantly, team unity and focus. Having played at five of the six US tournaments that CU has attended, I can say, without doubt, that this time around was the most challenging. US Ultimate, believe it or not, is still on the rise.

On a personal level, travelling to the US allows me to assess myself as a player: where I am now and where I need to be for the team. While I believe Clapham provides

the best training sessions in Europe, I also believe that familiarity with teammates and playing against the same players domestically can stifle progression. Usually in both domestic and European competitions I would predominately match up against less dominant players, with the opposition's key players being covered by the likes of Rich Harris, Enda Naughton or Tom Abrams. Elite-level Ultimate at US competitions offers no such luxuries; every player you mark up against is a key contributor and will punish you on both offence and defence given half a chance.

The Chesapeake Invite is an Elite warm-up tournament where top flight teams get to test their plays and players against each other in the build-up to US Nationals. The two day tournament is a gruelling affair by UK standards. On Saturday, teams play four 100-minute games back-to-back,



Clapham v Mad Cow © Kevin Leclaire 2013 ultiphotos.com

with the final group game played early on Sunday morning. Any team that wishes to make it through this group phase into the semi-finals has to play at a consistently high level and show no mercy in finishing games off. Any rest that you can achieve by winning big in early games pays dividends later on in the tournament. A 4-1 win to loss ratio is no guarantee of a semi-final spot (GOAT fell on the wrong side of this harsh fact in the other pool), so all teams aim for a clean sweep of wins to ensure a semi-final slot.

In previous years, CU has always managed to stay with the top US teams up to halftime, only to see the opposition pull away to fairly comfortable victories. This time around we set out to be competitive in both halves of the game; if we could do this, we knew we would be in the position to take some big scalps.

In our group we faced up against Chain Lightning (Atlanta), Ring of Fire (Raleigh/Durham), PoNY (New York), Madcow (Columbus) and Oakland (Pittsburgh). To put this in context, four of the teams we would be playing qualified for US Nationals later in the year, including Ring of Fire who finished joint 3rd in 2012. The other team, Oakland, was

predominantly made up from the 2013 College National Champions, Pittsburgh University. Madcow did not make Nationals in 2012 and so had to come through a pre-qualification tournament just to be invited.

Clapham came out of the group stages with a 4-1 record, securing a semi-final spot with a sudden-death win over Chain Lightning. A 14-12 loss to Boston Ironside in the semi was both a gutting defeat and further evidence that we are very close to matching the level of the top teams in the US. We will find out just how close in Italy next year.

Paul Waite

These photos were taken by UltiPhotos who will be sending several of their best photographers to Worlds in Italy for WJUC and for WUCC. They're planning on offering team photography packages to memorialise the experience for teams competing at Worlds. There's limited availability and team photography will be offered on a first come, first served basis. For more details, please contact kevin@ultiphotos.com.



What I learned while fighting jet-lag

"What are you doing bro?!"

Prior to the fourth back-to-back game on Saturday, I watched a soon-to-be opponent peel off his socks (anything to put off warming up!) to reveal the sort of wrinkled feet normally associated with spending too long in the bath. His teammate was immediately on to him about the importance of changing his socks after every game. "The level of received wisdom in US teams is really high," Tom Abrams said. It is clear that any team that is focussing on that level of detail is doing a better job of player development than most UK programmes. This detail applies to less mundane aspects than socks, such as footwork, positioning and rules knowledge. The key element is spending enough time together as a team, on the track, in the gym and at training and tournaments to share the collective wisdom and make all the minor adjustments that turn a good team into a great team.

The mark

"(Clapham's) pivots are slow, so we

can put more pressure on the open-side throw," said one opponent at halftime. Many players assume that at an elite level, the more physical your mark on disc the better – that getting tight and bumping the player is the objective. The new WFDF rules on marking violations are designed to give the offence more advantage in this situation, reducing or resetting the stall while not stopping the game. In the US, the first (and every subsequent) contact call resets the stall to zero. There was, therefore, a much greater emphasis on establishing and maintaining a legal marking distance while using a combination of good footwork and information from the sideline to maintain pressure. The more physical defensive work happens off the disc.

The open side

Since I arrived at Clapham, almost every training session has had time specifically devoted to breaking the mark. US teams do break the mark, but place much greater emphasis on cutters creating separation on the

open side. Fire of London were good at this in the mid-to-late noughties, no doubt due to the influence of ex-DoG player Bob "Matt" Hims, but it has virtually disappeared from the UK since. By aggressively attacking the deep space with cuts originating close to the disc, many US teams were able to generate uncontested under cuts. If your team can successfully reset the disc from the sideline (and all good teams can!), as well as keep poaches away from the deep space, then advancing the disc with open-side throws makes sense.

Pulls and offsides

"It's deep!" yelled Stobbo for the sixth time in as many O points. It took us a game and a half to eventually stop being surprised that the pull was going to land in the end zone, and more often than not towards the back. Given that every point contains a pull, and the difference between a good pull and a brick is 25 additional metres, I am still amazed so many UK teams allow (frankly) bad pullers to get away with it.

Of course it's easier to get away with a bad pull if everyone is offside. It did not take long with an observer watching to realise that, left to our own devices, we were consistently offside. The second offside in our crucial game against Chain Lightning gave them possession on the halfway line and was our last offside of the tournament. Timing your pull and chase is a skill, just like any other, and is the most consistent example of bad spirit in UK Ultimate. It's the same for the receiving team too; we were called offside on O twice over the weekend. And also the same for the sideline: we were given a warning by the observers for rushing the field before the score had been signalled, something that may have earned a US team a Team Misconduct Foul.

Observers

It is notable that the USAU-sanctioned observers were a much better trained group than on my first trip with Clapham in 2009. I have long been a vocal critic of the dangers of using observers, but both I, and the rest of the team, felt they enhanced the playing experience in several ways (e.g. offside calls, above). However, I remain wedded to self-refereeing and its intangible value to the Ultimate community. Spirit, conduct on the pitch and how to manage calls are important aspects of Ultimate that Clapham devotes time to at training and tournaments. Unfortunately, other than spirit guidelines like BECALM, there is very little training available to players on managing calls, and in particular, how to understand and process conflicting interpretations of a situation. Just as we devote time to running track, learning the playbook, and practicing our lefty scoober, we should also train to be better (self-) referees. Instead of calling for refs every time a bad call is made, let's educate players on how to make better calls.

Jaimie Cross



Clapham Chesapeake © Kevin Leclaire 2013 ultiphotos.com

Ultimatum2013

Annual UK Ultimate Magazine

