



Ultimatum 2014

Annual UK Ultimate Magazine





Kimberly Tee

Artemis v Sin City WUCC 2014 © Christine Frances 2014 rushworthphotography.co.uk

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was brought to you by:

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The Tour, top 16

Bear Cavalry 	 3	Punt 	 4	Clapham 0 	 =
Cambridge 	 =	SYC	 1	EMO 1	 1
Thundering Herd 1	 6	ROBOT	 7	Chevron	 1
Brighton Breezy	 4	LLLeeds	 =	Fire 1	 3
Black Eagles	 2	Phoenix London	New Entry 	Zimmer	New Entry 
Bristol Mixed 1	 1	Iceni	 5	Brighton Gritty	 2
BAM	 4	Relentless	 6	Ranelagh 1	 2
RGS	 7	Brighton Pretty	New Entry 	Manchester	 3
Shiny Happy Meeple	 1	Swift	 3	Clapham D	New Entry 
Peeps	 2	Nice Bristol's Cupbowl	 8	Cult 1	 5
BAF	 3	Crown Jewels	 4	Ka-Pow	 5
Dyn-0-Mixed	New Entry 	Dragon Knights 1	 3	DED	 1
Pingu Jam	New Entry 	Blink	 4	Devon 1	 4
JR 1	 3	Manchester	New Entry 	NEO	New Entry 
Scarecrow	 2	Devon	New Entry 	Birmingham 1	 10
Reading Ultimate	 4	All Things Brighton Beautiful		LLLeeds	 3



Richard Taylor

Robert White

Editor's Note:

Ka-Pow! v Mighty Hucks Beach Nationals © George Perry 2014

An apology, an acknowledgement, a request and an observation

Dear Ultimate Community,

It's been another great year of Ultimate in the UK. Cast your minds back to 2014 – 13 British club teams competed at the World Club Championship in Lecco; Junior Indoor Nationals had a record 28 teams; and it was the first year the UKU has had a full-time events manager, the fantastic Benji Heywood. There are quite a few things I want to say in this year's editor's note, so I'll try to keep each one brief...

An apology

First and foremost, this is an apology for the fact *Ultimatum* is publishing so late this year! The *Ultimatum* Crew is run entirely by volunteers, and this year we had a lot of things – weddings, babies, organising the U23s World Championships and general life – getting in the way of getting this

magazine out at a reasonable time. I also owe an apology to everyone who wrote their article several months ago and has had to wait this long to see it in print! We hope you enjoy reading about the 2014 season just as much now as you would have over Christmas, and hope to do (significantly) better next year!

An acknowledgement

This magazine (however late!) wouldn't make it at all without our wonderful copyeditors, so a huge thank you should go to Sarah Roushanzamir, Lauren Bryant and Rich Hims.

Thanks you as well to Steve Smith for creating the mailing list, and to James and James Fulfilment for their support with the distribution of *Ultimatum*.

Finally, thank you to Si Hill for his constant support, and to Jack Goolden for the design work, a wonderful layout, and his constant patience with me!

A request

As ever, we are looking for stories on different teams and new musings on Ultimate. Each year, people say things to me like, "I wish more teams were featured in *Ultimatum*." We would love to hear from your team! If you don't write it, we can't print it!

An observation

I'd like to conclude with something I've been observing over the past year or so. I am really impressed with how Ultimate-related fitness has been developing in the UK. While top clubs have always done lots of training and conditioning, recently

it has become more organised and focused. There is more information out there – in articles and from Strength and Conditioning coaches – and more clubs and players seem to be following Ultimate-specific fitness plans. The results are noticeable – UK players look more explosive and athletic. I hope it leads to fewer Ultimate-related injuries as well. We are pushing ourselves as players, and I hope we continue to challenge teams on the international scene.

Enjoy *Ultimatum*!

Cheers, Mara

*Additional comment from Si Hill: More than anyone we all owe a great deal of thanks to our Editor, Mara Alperin. Pulling *Ultimatum* together can be a somewhat thankless task which Mara has done brilliantly for several years now. Thanks, Mara!*

London Calling again



GB v Austria U17 WUJC © Neil Gardner 2014 ultiphotos.com

A very quick benefit of employing Benji Heywood to manage UKU events was that I had time to put in a bid to host World U23s in July 2015, which we were eventually awarded towards the end of 2014. One of our goals for the period 2013–16 was to bid for – and hopefully host – at least one major international event. Tick.

As a former WFDF Ultimate Chair, I was keen that we worked with WFDF to re-define the relationship between Tournament Organising Committee (TOC) and WFDF, because there were important changes that WFDF needed to put in place (mostly enabling WFDF to have increased control). This created some delays in the decision being announced but



we're really happy to be working hard on the event now.

I'm particularly excited that we are using UCL Sports Ground. I first visited the venue in 2008 and knew immediately that I wanted to run a World Championships there. We've been working with the UCL team on that idea ever since.

To add to the excitement we have now also been awarded the honour of hosting WUGC 2016 at the same location in June 2016 – that's something I've had on my mind since I played at WUCC 1995 with Sneeky.

Just looking within the UK, it's a wonderful opportunity for us to build interest and recognition for Ultimate in this country. Hopefully clubs and players will be able to piggy-back on the interest that will be generated by running two World Championships. We'll be running special events alongside the championships such as specific "schools-days" to help meet our long-term aim to see "Ultimate in Every School".

We plan to reconnect with ex-players during these two years and as a starting point we are organising a "GB Ultimate reunion" around the Opening ceremony on Sunday 12th July 2015. We hope to bring as many current and former GB players as we possibly can to the opening ceremony. So if you are in contact with GB alumni please let them know and invite them along. We think they will be interested to see what has happened to Ultimate since they left; and we want to see all the GB shirt designs from the last 30 years!

We're going to need loads of help to make these events as good as they can be. We hope that many UKU members will be able to support the events as volunteers and/or spectators.

Si Hill

Please keep watching for more information:

Ben Pocock

On 17th July, the Malaysian Airlines flight MH17 crashed in eastern Ukraine killing all 298 people on board. At first this was another tragic event you read about in the news; as the hours following it unfolded, it became clear that it was one that would impact the Ultimate community. Ben Pocock, 20, had just finished his second year at Loughborough University and was on his way to Perth to study for six months as part of his course. Ben was part of a number of Ultimate teams: Haze, EMO and JR to name a few and in his short time in the sport had shown plenty of promise to show he would have become an excellent player. There have been numerous tributes paid to Ben and when Ultimatum asked for an article, we felt that it would be good way to honour and remember him.

For those of you who don't know Ben, his enthusiasm knew no boundaries; he had an energising effect on senior players and other new players alike; his enthusiasm was as infectious as his smile; his sense of humour unique and always on display – even on a cold, wet and muddy Tuesday night in Leicester, he would be excited to be at training. For many of us who have been playing for a long time he was a spark to push us on and to remember why we love playing the game. Ben's first time playing for EMO was during a preseason warm-up tournament. He had originally said he would play with Haze but when he saw EMO were short of players he was eager to help out his new teammates. This didn't mean he ditched his friends on Haze; instead he played on both teams and helped EMO to win the tournament. This was testament to Ben's attitude at both Haze and EMO as a hard worker and a good teammate. Ben had won player of the year and most committed player at Haze in his short time at the club. His commitment to his friends and teammates, both old and new, is something for which Ben will always be remembered.



His family held a celebration event in September and we were struck by the many stories from his childhood, his school days, as a member of the local cricket club and his time at university that no one had a bad word to say about him. Terms of praise are thrown around these days but in Ben's case it is no cliché; he really was a top bloke. Ben had played with Haze for two years and for EMO for a few tournaments but he will be remembered with great fondness and he will be a part of both clubs forever. Both Haze and EMO have retired his jersey numbers of 3 and 81.

Ben may have only been a part of the ultimate community for a relatively short while but he made a huge impact on many people and will be greatly missed.

Dave Povey, EMO #21

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The trouble with Juniors



Rupal Ghelani

GB U19 WUJC © Neil Gardner 2014 ultiphotos.com

We know every Ultimate team's dream is to have its own version of La Masia: To have a production line of players being churned out, year-on-year, to spur their club on to higher and higher heights.

But is there another side to having a big input of junior players? You train them. You teach them. You make them part of you club, part of your future plans. You watch them grow as players and as people. All the time, knowing that if they go on to further education, they will move away at age 18 or 19. So you have this very limited time frame in which you get to benefit from the work being put into their development.

But then other parts of the sport start taking notice of your junior players

and the work you're putting into them. The players start being offered the chance to train for the national under 17s and under 20s teams. They make the grade. You're thinking back at club HQ, "Hey! This is great. Our junior players get the chance to play at a high level and play big tournament Ultimate, travel to new places and meet new people."

Then, you're told that the national under 20s team is going to play in all three Open Tours to help prepare the team for its upcoming tournament. The under 17s will be playing together at a few Tours as well.

Suddenly, these players – who you've been training and building to help your whole club get stronger and make the next big step – are being taken

away. No longer will they be the new up-and-coming player in your squad, learning to play in a no pressure environment, at the highest domestic level even before they leave for the promise of university Ultimate. They are now playing in different colours, on a different team, with different structures and ways of playing. Often against the players they have been training alongside for many years. So where does that leave you?

You never hold them back knowing what and honour it is to represent your country at any level, but you start to wonder – where would the club be if we had these players for a whole season at the top level? How far could we go?

So what do you do? You look to the next batch of players and start building them up to take the place of their predecessors. And watch as they get spotted by the big guys and take notice. But there is hope. So players enjoy how you play and how you run things and chose to stay. Some can't afford the price of the big stage so stay local. Some even come back after going around the world and playing for the next step up and want to repay your faith in them by helping the next class from your Ultimate factory develop.

So Juniors can give you a headache for selection, but it's one I gladly welcome.

Jamie "Jam" Banks, Devon #0

UKU Juniors

The rate at which junior Ultimate is growing within the UK is amazing, and every year throws at me a new challenge as UKU Junior Programme Manager. Challenges are good though – they keep us alert to the ever-changing issues that occur when working with a group of young, highly competitive athletes.

There are many areas where we have made significant improvements in the last year, including communication and annual planning – all Junior staff now meet in October/November for a meeting to plan out the following year's events. Also I'd like to add a special mention to bookkeeper (and former GB Women's captain!) Laura Atkins, who has been a godsend on the topic of finance.

In addition, we now have firm structured levels for staffing. We have recruited more staff to the Junior Programme as a whole, and now operate with one manager, one lead coach, one assistant coach and one physio PER TEAM. Dr Cath Lester works alongside the physios as the doctor for the whole group.

Special thanks must go at this point to our Medical/Physio Team: Georgie Davin at the head, Holly Taylor, Patricia Collins, Jack Dawkins and Melissa Gollan. I can only describe them as simply awesome!

We had a few accidents and injuries this year which required immediate on-pitch attention, including a 'clash mid-air and mid layout' which required an MRI scan, and a hospital visit for another player that meant Dr Lester missed her flight home! Thankfully, both players were all right, and 'Georgie's Med/Physio Team' rose to the occasion each and every time without hesitation. I could not and would not be able to do this job without all of them in place!

Our volunteer staff continue to amaze me with their levels of commitment



and support, and as a team I am convinced we will continue to develop and grow at alarming rates in the next few years. Many other countries are now asking me 'how we do things' and 'how they can replicate our systems' within their teams, so our progress and relative success is being appreciated by others out with our organisation.

We work closely with coaches and parents, and I believe the Junior Programme offers the safest environment we can for them to fully develop both as Ultimate players and as young adults.

So, with your help and continued support I will endeavour to do what I can to provide a safe, structured, competitive, fun-sporting environment for the best junior Ultimate players within the UK.

Ruth Flight, UKU Junior Programme Manager

Ruth (Gifillan) Flight is the UKU Junior Programme Manager. She is a former swimmer who has represented Scotland and Great Britain for over 10 years, and was an Olympic, Commonwealth, World, and European finalist during that time and subsequently coached and helped swimmers to World finalist level. Ruth began working with the UKU in 2009 when her eldest daughter started playing. Her two younger daughters are now also GB representatives.

"I like GB Juniors because we all really get on well together as a team. We take the intense training very seriously but still have a really great time together. We make new friends, and by the end of the competition it feels like a big family."

Brad Pugh, U17 Open

"The best part [of the European Youth Ultimate Championships] was the winning points in the final and how we came together as a team. Also, thank you to the great off-pitch support from the coaches, physios and administration!"

Nick Dodd, U17 Open

"The best part of playing GB Juniors is meeting new people, watching high skill Ultimate, travelling and meeting players of other nationalities but most of all, having the opportunity to play a sport I love."

Leah Atkins, U17 Women's

"GB have good support with coaches, physio and medical support."

Heather Atkins, U17 Mum



Hayden Slaughter

Brighton v Pier Pressure Tour 1 © Andy Moss 2014

know them all), analyse the teams, pick facts out of their bios, and generally provide some kind of angle to keep everyone interested and give the captains time to decide on their next picks. As the draft progresses, it should speed up.

Picked last?

In reality, several players in the draft will be expecting to be picked last... so most will end up being surprised they weren't last. I've spoken to the last pick in several drafts, and the overriding feeling is that they're even more motivated to improve, and show their worth. Every other player near the bottom of the draft is also specifically picked by their captain, which makes them all feel wanted, and helps them fit into the team better

than if they were randomly assigned in the last rounds (which we tried one year, and won't be doing again). By the end of the draft, everything is moving quite quickly and everyone has had a couple of drinks anyway. If you are still worried, you can break the player pool into groups and make sure the beginners aren't left until the end (but bear in mind this may raise other complications).

Creating fair teams

Let's assume your captains all have comparable ability and knowledge of the player pool. We found that after choosing the initial pick order at random, 'snaking' through the rounds was the fairest way to pick. So with four teams, the 1st pick will also pick 8th, 9th, 16th, 17th, and so

on. The 3rd pick gets 6th, 11th, 14th, 19th, and so on.

If you have a mix of genders in the captains pool, then you should include an 'opposite-gender' round or two, inserted in an appropriate round.

Customising your league

You can add whatever you want! Fantasy Leagues, hype videos, off-pitch games like giant Jenga, or extra points for bringing cakes, having beginners or playing very spiritedly...

In Brighton, we've found that our Draft Leagues have brought together players who never would have crossed paths otherwise – our newest freshers are playing alongside our retired-from-Tour, married-with-two-

kids veterans. The Draft has placed the players from rival universities alongside one another, both in terms of pick order and as teammates – breaking down any potential ego issues or boundaries built up by the rivalry. The semi-competitive nature of the league has also got players trying their hardest during the weeknights, eager to prove their worth and justify their captain's decision, perhaps hoping to be picked a round earlier the next time a Draft League rolls around.

Felix Shardlow - Brighton Ultimate coach and co-founder.

BUDL, BIDL and BUDIT founder and organiser.

CULT: Learning to Lead

Last year Nick Wong wrote an article for Ultimatum tracking the journey of the Cambridge mixed team from established-but-not-quite-top-team to qualifying for the World Ultimate Club Championship (WUCC). The next part of the journey saw the team finish 6th at WUCC in Lecco (or, as we like to say when in need of superlatives, the highest finish outside North America). This chapter really started for me when Nick asked if I would co-captain the team with him, so this article will focus on aspects we found challenging and what we think was important for the success of the team.

Share the load

My first tip would be to divide up the job. In deciding who to team up with, make sure you and your co-captain work well together. Be ready to apologise and forgive each other as tempers will almost certainly flare at some point! Any disagreements between the leadership need to be resolved very quickly as there's nothing more distracting than arguing captains – so make sure your values, ideas and style are compatible.

Delegate

In addition to having two captains, we also had two vice-captains. Everyone has different strengths, and sharing out tasks makes the most of this. It also stops you feeling overloaded – often allowing you to play better – and others will feel more invested in the team and its success. In particular, we found it helpful to clearly delineate each person's role so we could fully let go of various tasks.

Get everyone on board

Next, have a team strategy and vision. It is far more effective to talk about this in terms of processes rather than outcomes. Be clear and make sure all your players buy into your "brand". For Cambridge, this was to play safe, effective offense. As a team we had

strong disc skills but were relatively weak in defence; though we spent lots of time improving the latter, we were never going to get so many blocks that we could afford to waste any possessions. Whatever your vision is, it's something that all of your players must buy into and focus on to be effective. In Cambridge's case, it was certainly a large contributor to our success.

As a slight digression, I think this is an often under-appreciated aspect of Ultimate: your team may eventually come up against an opposition whose offence you struggle to stop (particularly in still, sunny conditions as we saw in Lecco). Keeping position on offence and eliminating unnecessary turnovers should therefore be a top priority for any aspiring team.

Appreciate your teammates

Finally, captains should always value and care for their players. Nobody wins alone; your players will ultimately be those who do the winning for you and an important part of your job is therefore to get the best out of each individual on your team. Trust, empathy and a little tact are very important. This is an active process that isn't achieved by simply expecting players to bring their best to the pitch every time, however much you feel they should. Get to know all of your players and what their motivations for playing are – you may be surprised to find some of their reasons significantly different to your own – and try to ensure they feel valued.

There are many implications to taking this approach to captaining, but here is just one from a long list – pitch time.

It's important manage expectations on pitch time and refrain from shortening lines if it's unlikely to change the game's outcome. Try to be objective and remember that



quiet, consistent players are as essential to your success as showy stars. For playing captains, assessing your own performance and impact objectively when calling lines can be very challenging. Getting it wrong will negatively affect team morale, especially if you lose the game. Variables also change in different situations; a player whose family is watching may care much more about pitch time and their role on the field than usual. Be mindful to this and try to anticipate; a vocally upset player on your sideline can be a major distraction to the rest of the team. A pre-game chat can pre-empt many issues here.

This article shares just a few of the stronger impressions I was left with having captained Cambridge this year. As a final note, captaining Cambridge to WUCC was a fantastic experience made so by the dedication and camaraderie of the players on the team. I'd like to thank them all for a great season and encourage players to give captaining a go... but remember there's more to leadership than writing play books, running practices and paying tournament fees!

Magali Matsumiya

Ultimate in East Africa

From 18th–21st April 2014, 12 teams gathered in Mombasa, Kenya for FEAST VI, the sixth annual Frisbee East Africa Sand Tournament. The tournament, organised by Nairobi Ultimate, is going from strength to strength and this year attracted teams from South Sudan, Uganda and Tanzania as well as various regions in Kenya. 2014 was the first time Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, entered the tournament.

Moving to Tanzania

In the UK, Ultimate was a big part of my life (having played for GB Juniors, GB U23, University and Club.) When I moved to Tanzania in October 2012, I thought I would be sacrificing this. After spending some months finding and enjoying other sports, I heard from a friend that he had stumbled across a group of expats throwing a disc at one of the international school. We went to check it out and enjoyed casual pickup games for a few months. In early 2013 we got wind of the Easter beach tournament in Mombasa, but we didn't have enough time to prepare. We therefore looked ahead to the following year and considered bringing more structure into our pickup games.

Jays of Social Media

It was at this time that we discovered a local sports club through Facebook: Image Professional (IP) Sports Club, who appeared to be playing Ultimate as well. It turned out they had acquired discs and were teaching themselves the game. So we invited the players to our pick-up games.

They turned up in full force, photographer and all! Since they had been teaching themselves, their understanding of the structure of the game was limited. In particular, they all struggled with the concept of marking one player and staying with them, as they all wanted to chase the disc (remember your primary school

football days?). Throw in a fairly substantial language barrier, and it was a recipe for some frustration all round.

So a US teammate, Jenny Tiberio (who is fluent in Swahili) and I put together some early morning coaching sessions on the beach. We'd meet at 7:30am to avoid the heat! We went through the basics, including throwing, stack, cutting, forcing and defence. With such enthusiasm, the guys improved very quickly and in no time impressed other players at the regular pick-up games.

Preparing for FEAST 2014

The time was coming to start preparations for FEAST 2014. It turns out it is very difficult to organise a team from Tanzania to go to a tournament in Kenya! With people unsure about Visas, work commitments and funds, we weren't sure of the final roster until the bus pulled away for its 16-hour journey. We had agreed with the leaders of IP Sports Club that three of their most committed young players would join the team: Daudi Salehe (18), Omary Chapa (21) and 19-year-old Twallib Ahmed, aka Babu Ally (Grandad Ally).

The leaders of IP Sports Club were also travelling by car to the tournament to learn more about the sport and take photos, but the three young boys decided to travel with the team on the bus. I'm sure none of them would have guessed that their first time leaving Tanzania would be for an Ultimate Frisbee tournament! Unsure until the last minute that they had acquired correct temporary travel permits, and more importantly permission from their families, it was such a joy to see them bright eyed and early for the bus. Each was armed with a one-man tent provided by the Sports Club, an impossibly small luggage bag and a dodgy certificate for yellow fever vaccination.

Flying Bongos at FEAST 2014

Our team name came from the nickname for someone living in Dar es Salaam: Mbongo. This is the Swahili personification of a brain, because you have to use your brain to get along in the big city. The team was captained by me and Piotr Slimak, who later played for Dedushka at WUCC 2014. As well as Tanzania, the team represented the UK, US, Germany, France, Belgium and Poland. We finished mid-table, losing to overall winners Kisumu Frisbee Club (KFC) of Kenya. But by far, the highlight of the tournament was that we won spirit! This was the best possible example to set for our three young prodigies to learn the importance of Spirit of the Game.

Ultimate in East Africa – or wherever you may be

We are now aware of a well-established community of Ultimate Frisbee in East Africa. There is an annual circuit of tournaments, and the Flying Bongos recently returned from Kampala 7 Hills Tournament in Uganda – East Africa's biggest grass tournament. At this tournament we narrowly lost the semi-final but due to expensive and complicated travel logistics we were unable to take any Tanzanian players.

It is a great inspiration to attend these tournaments because often over 80% of the Kenyan and Ugandan teams are made of local players rather than expats; look out for teams from both these countries at Beach Worlds in Dubai 2015. In Tanzania the guys from IP Sports Club hosted for first the time an Ultimate tournament as part of Matema Beach Festival, with participants from Tanzania and Malawi. We hope to integrate this tournament into the regional international circuit and continue to promote the game amongst Tanzanians, particularly females.



Perhaps a longer term aim would be to have a national team at worlds, in which case look out of Daudi, Omary and Babu Ally as main handlers a few years down the line!

If you end up over the other side of the world, ask around other sports groups, Facebook pages or Ultimate contacts in neighbouring countries; chances are there's a group of people throwing a disc closer than you think.

Rose Chilton

Annual Tournaments in East Africa:

February – Kigali Hat Tournament, Rwanda

April Easter Weekend – Frisbee East Africa Sand Tournament, Mombasa, Kenya

September – Kampala 7 Hills Grass Tournament, Uganda

November – Matema Beach Festival, Tanzania

Don't forget your hat!



Due to the nature of my work, I always take my annual holiday in my slack months of January and February, when the weather in Britain is at its bleakest. However, it is one of the best times of year to travel in Asia, so the Indian subcontinent and Indo-China have been regular destinations. I always take a disc with me, hoping to find someone on a beach to throw with, but it wasn't until meeting some of the Indian team at the World Championships of Beach Ultimate in Italy (2011) that I discovered the growing Asian Ultimate community.

"I'm planning a trip to southern India in 2012," I told them. "Where can I find a pick-up game?"

"You should go to the Auroville Hat, near Pondicherry, about the end of January. You'll enjoy that."

Hat tournaments are very popular right across Asia, possibly due to the small player pool in each country. If you want to play someone other than

the people who turn up to weekly practice, you have to travel, often quite a long way. Getting an entire team onto a regional flight is a logistical nightmare, as any team captain will tell you. Hat tournaments are the perfect answer.

Auroville Hat

The Indian team had been right; I did really enjoy the Auroville Hat. It was great fun, if something of a cultural shock to find that the first pull was scheduled for 6:30am on Saturday. We lined up for the first point as the sun rose above the trees, so I could at least see my new teammates' faces, even if I was struggling to remember names. By the end of our second game at 10:30 it was very hot. Much too hot to run. We huddled in patches of shade and watched the teams playing the next round of games with some pity. At midday a halt was called for a three-hour lunch break while everyone waited for the temperature to reduce a little.



It gave me a chance to talk to the other players. Most of the 12 teams had one or two ex-pats playing, but the majority of players were Indian, mostly Chennai and Bangalore, and the host team from Auroville, which is an international community based around an ashram. There were players from even further afield – from Hyderabad, Mumbai and Delhi – who'd flown or spent a couple of days on the train because distances in India are so vast. There was a wide range of ages on each team, and I was pleased to discover I was not the only player present who would qualify as a Grandmaster; most teams also had one or two Juniors, the youngest being 11 years old. There was a range of abilities as well. Sadly the number of women players in India is still small, and each team only had two or three, so most points were played with a 6:1 gender split.

We played until the light began to fade, and then came supper and cultural shock number two. One of

the Aurovilleans' rules is no alcohol on site. "If you want a beer, you'll have to take a taxi into Pondicherry, 15 kilometres away." I was far too tired for that, but it was just as well, as we were playing horribly early again the next morning.

On Sunday there were more games (to a higher standard as we began to understand our individual strengths and weaknesses), more smiles, and more good Spirit – there were a few foul calls, but always quickly and amicably settled. And most games were close, a credit to the honesty of players in filling out the pre-registration form asking for skill, fitness and experience levels, and to the organiser's maths in balancing the teams. After another long lunch we played our last game, then settled back to watch the final and a challenge match between the host team and an all-stars team selected from all the visitors.



Big Phat Phnom Penh Hat

Big Phat Phnom Penh Hat 2013 had some notable contrasts with India. Cambodian Ultimate appeared to be about 95% ex-pats of many nationalities, with only a few Khmers. Still, there were good numbers from neighbouring Thailand, and a few from Vietnam, Malaysia, China, Korea, Philippines, Taiwan and India. There were more women too – most of the eight teams had a 10:5 split, allowing 4:3 or 5:2 play. The fields were properly grassed and mown, instead of scrubby sand and patchy grass that you often find in warmer climates. Nor would there be any pre-dawn starts, or much concession to the heat. Just enough time to eat breakfast before the rendezvous with the cattle trucks that bussed us out to the fields for the 8:30am start.

The biggest difference, though, was the booze. The organisers had persuaded one of the big brewing companies to sponsor them by putting

a bar up on the side of the field and dispensing free ice-cold beer to anyone who wanted one. Or two. Or three... Frankly the Phnom Penh-ers are a hedonistic bunch; there was a pre-tournament party, a Saturday night party in a nightclub with live bands and, yes, a couple of free beer vouchers, and a post-tournament party if you had the stamina. Pitch-side, there were chocolate brownies by the free fruit table, if you asked nicely. There was reggae and soul music to accompany play or to dance between games. No wonder people were prepared to travel so far. I know I had a good time, and would definitely recommend the experience.

Chiang Mai Hat

This year I returned to Thailand and registered for a one day-er in Chiang Mai, which is in the mountains, so there are cooler nights and less humid days. There were six teams, with players mostly from Bangkok and Chiang Mai, and a few from



Cambodia and Laos – again mostly ex-pats but also a fair number of Thais – and enough women to play with a 4:3 split. It was a low-key and friendly event, held on some sports fields that were part of an army base some way out of the city. It was the first time I'd seen play suspended when military helicopters took off or landed, but the downdraught played havoc with the flight of the disc, so it seemed eminently sensible. It didn't happen very often, and the rest of the time we had the place to ourselves. It was hard work trying to play the entire tournament in one (very hot) day, something the organisers are considering changing next year. It was quite a challenge to collect and eat a packed lunch with only 13 minutes until the next game!

In a bizarre echo of Auroville there was no alcohol on sale in the Irish Pub, not even a Guinness, on that particular night. In fact there was no alcohol on sale anywhere in Thailand as a snap general election had been called for the next day, and that's the rules – no whisky or beer available from 6:00pm until after the polls close the next day.

Spirit of the Game

The biggest similarity between these three tournaments is probably true of any hat tournament anywhere in the

world: it's the place you're likeliest to find the best Spirit, in that everyone has come for the joy of play, has no idea who they'll be playing with or against, and although winning is always more fun than losing, it isn't actually important whether your team comes first or last. And everyone is welcome, regardless of standard or age, from beginner to grizzled veteran, as long as you're honest with the organisers and your teammates. (In my case: "I'm old, slow, and an embarrassment on man-to-man defence, but I know what I'm doing with a disc in my hand and I'll happily play zone...").

Where shall I go next year? Who knows? There's a big hat tournament in Vietnam towards the end of December. And someone was trying to get one going in Rwanda at the same time I was in Thailand, which may happen again next spring. And if the British summer turns out to be awful, I could easily be tempted by a Spanish beach hat in October.

So here are my tips for beating the winter blues: fly somewhere nice, pack some sunscreen, pre-register (don't just turn up)... and don't forget your hat!

Brian Crepin

Success and player turnover



In 2014, East Midlands Open (EMO) had quite a season:

- 2nd in the UK Tour rankings
- 1st at Midlands Regionals
- 3rd at UK Nationals
- 9th at EUCF
- 16th at WUCC

By any measure, that's an impressive season. It wasn't always like this for EMO though.

As the dust settles on the 10th and most successful year of EMO, it seems appropriate to look back at our story and at how we've grown from a group

of students with the desire to improve into a team ranked in the top 16 in the world – a pretty incredible journey.

Our history is well known. We've been around a while, broke the top 8 in the UK early on, but we had to rebuild after WUCC 2006 and then yo-yoed between A Tour and B Tour in 2007. This rebuilding paid off and we gradually moved up and up until we reached the dizzy heights of this season. But how does a club that regularly experiences such high player turnover do it?

EMO has always relied on students, from the early days when the club was mostly students to today, when we have a few more 'grown ups' but still have students filling coaching roles

and committee positions. Ex-EMO players are scattered amongst A Tour teams such as Clapham, Chevron, Fire, Ka-Pow and Brighton. As students graduate and move away, we lose them; we have to begin again each year with a new batch of players. We have to start fresh and teach the fundamentals. Teams with a more established core, such as Chevy and Clapham, won't start training as a club until early in the year and will fine-tune aspects of their play from the previous season, whereas our off-season probably lasts a month at most as we welcome in the new crop in November to get ready for another campaign.

This brings its own challenges but our approach is simple: we use clear and defined systems that are easy to learn but take time to master. If you've played against us you'll recognise our pull play which is incredibly simple to learn yet hard to shut down – which allows us to get newbies up to speed quickly and then fine-tune in the spring and summer. We are rarely at our best at Tour 1 because we usually have several players in important roles on both our first and second team who are playing their first Tour with the club. It's vital to have goals and an end-game to work towards in a structure like ours, and our qualifying for three out of the past four EUCF tournament is testament to the buy-in

and belief the squad has in what we have tried and will continue to try to achieve.

This simple approach allows players to develop and realise their potential. Over the years EMO has had players represent most GB squads, including current and ex-players in both of the last World Games cycles. Losing these players for Tour events is something that benefits us greatly, as counterintuitive as that may seem. It means that the rest of the players have to step up and fill the vital roles left by our GB contingent, which both improves the games of the players left behind and shows us who's ready to take on more responsibility for our team. When our GB players return, we're better for it because we've added that strength in depth. It's no coincidence that the first year we secured a spot at EUCF ourselves was in 2012 – on the back of the two-year GB cycle where we had several players heavily involved.

2014 was an incredible season and as we move into 2015, we will undoubtedly be faced with some players moving on and, hopefully, some representing various different GB teams. That means having to rebuild again, which requires a refocusing of the club's short and long term goals; the short term focus will be on player development rather than preparing for a World challenge, and we will need to keep the 'big picture' of Nationals and Euros in mind and use the season to build towards those big events. If there is one thing we have learnt over the past decade it's that having a clear goal that everyone in the club buys into creates a productive and successful environment. Those goals will change year-on-year, but our culture and team ethos remains the same; work hard and, above all, enjoy it. Remember: we don't get paid for this, so have some fun doing it.

Dave Povey, EMO #21



James Lavender

Jack Skipper



Adam Batchelor

Paddy Hart

Results by Design

Ultimate fitness

Dave Petersen is a Sports Coach and Personal Trainer (PT), and the founder of the Results by Design Gym in Battersea. He has worked in the fitness industry since 1991, but it wasn't until 2011 that he learned about Ultimate Frisbee and began training Ultimate players. He now works individually with over three dozen Ultimate players, and is the Strength & Conditioning Coach for GB Women, Iceni and Fire.

I first met Dave at an Iceni session on sprint technique. I was coming back from a mild knee injury, and I started weekly sessions with him to make sure I was keeping up my fitness without adding unnecessary pressure to my knee. When I asked Dave if I could write about him for Ultimatum, he was excited, but still made me do three sets of ten kettle bell swings before he answered my questions.

Intro to Ultimate

Dave first heard about Ultimate from Ellie Hand, who was trialling for GB at the time and looking for gyms in her area. Ellie explained, "I rang up Results by Design and Dave said it was a personal training only gym. I said 'Oh, ok sorry, that's not what I'm looking for', but he asked what my story was. So I told him about Ultimate, and he wished me good luck."

About two weeks later, Dave rang Ellie back – he had looked up Ultimate online and watched lots of YouTube videos, and was very intrigued by the sport. He offered to train Ellie, as he wanted to spend more time working with athletes on strength and conditioning, rather than working mostly with clients on weight-loss.

Dave said that he could see Ellie was a serious athlete with lots of passion for strength and conditioning. He had worked with other athletes in the past, but they didn't always take it seriously or weren't working towards their potential. Ellie restored his faith, and he said he sees this across Ultimate players – they are always working hard. Word spread through the London Ultimate community, and Dave was soon working as a PT for a number of Ultimate players, across Open, Women's and Mixed divisions.

Personal Training

As Dave put it, a PT is someone who helps a person – or a team – set and achieve fitness goals. The role encompasses a lot of individual work figuring out what to work on and how to communicate with different sorts of people.

Dave stressed that there is no "one-size-fits-all" approach, and that sessions vary throughout the year; for instance, in the days leading up to a big tournament, a workout may include performing reps with lower weights, to focus on explosiveness rather than tiring out muscles. However, a typical hour-long session with Dave includes foam rolling, a dynamic warm-up, muscle-activation exercises, power exercises (such as sprinting or jumping), strength and conditioning, cool-down and "homework" for the players to take away with them.



DED v Manchester Nationals © Christine Frances 2014 rushworthphotography.co.uk



Clapham v Chevron Tour 2 © Andy Moss 2014

Fit for Ultimate

Ellie said, "At first Dave didn't know much about Ultimate and I knew little about strength training and I think we taught each other! I learned so much and got so much stronger, more powerful, and more injury resistant than I had ever been."

Along with learning from Ellie, Dave watched lots of YouTube videos, in particular games from the GB squads at Europeans in 2011. He went to London Calling in 2014 and 2015, and plans to attend EUC in Copenhagen this summer.

Dave and his wife Carol, also a PT, run a Facebook page called "Fit for Ultimate", which has over 1,000 subscribers. This page on "strength and conditioning training and support for Ultimate Frisbee teams" offers advice, photos, videos, daily stretches and motivation. Not everyone has the time, money or desire to see a PT, but Dave and Carol want all Ultimate players, even those who do not train with them, to have access to results-based training information to improve performance and reduce the risk of injury.

Advice

I asked Dave what advice he would give all Ultimate players. He talked about the importance of warming up. His favourite warm-up stretch is dubbed the "World's Greatest Stretch", which incorporates a lunge, hamstring stretch and hip flexor stretch.

"Even for non-elite players, some things are key," Dave said. "Do a dynamic warm-up, with any general strength programme. It's about the effort. It's better to do a bad programme with good effort than the other way around."

Carol stressed the value of recovery time. "Recovery is an individual thing, often as much an art as it is a science," she said. "So your programme designs need to be individual and flexible."

However, there are some principles Ultimate players should follow:

- 1) Listen to your body! And don't be afraid to swap a track or gym session for a recovery workout.
- 2) 2 gym sessions a week is plenty. Also, 1 or 2 quality sets are enough if you have had a tough week/weekend of practice.
- 3) Try to incorporate sprints at the beginning of training, rather than on a separate day, to allow an extra day for recovery.
- 4) On weeks you are not competing or can't make practice, take advantage and get a track session or extra volume in your gym sessions.
- 5) 1 leg squats are great as they are tough but not very draining on recovery, unlike deadlifts.

The Best Part

I asked Dave what the best part of his job is. He replied, "We meet a lot of new athletes, and look forward to helping them achieve their goals. I love training people. Even the special ones!"

And how do Ultimate players compare to the rest of his clients? Dave smiled when I asked him. "They always train hard, and actually listen to what I say and do it. Also, they're the worst time keepers. They're always late."

Mara Alperin

The Importance of Manual Treatment

I love sports, and I have always been interested in manual therapy. As a teenager I did lots of juggling and drumming, and I knew I wanted to do a job that involved using my hands. I earned my degree in sports therapy in 2009, and have been practicing ever since.

In the meantime, I also started playing Ultimate Frisbee, but for some reason it had never occurred to me that Ultimate players would need manual therapy treatment! The "eureka moment" happened during a Indoors tournament in London. In the same weekend, I met then-captain of Clapham Richard Harris and started chatting about sports therapy in Ultimate, and later that day, I snapped my left ACL and tore the left meniscus during a game! I realised that Ultimate players could really benefit from manual therapy!

Manual therapy involves using hands-on techniques to diagnose and treat soft tissue and joint structures. It can be used for reducing pain and treating injuries, as well as increasing a person's range of motion (ROM).

In particular, sports massage enhances performance and prolongs a sports career by preventing injury, reducing pain or swelling in muscles and joints, increasing flexibility and improving recovery rates. It's also highly effective in aiding the rapid recovery of an athlete from an injury by encouraging greater kinesthetic awareness and in turn promoting the body's natural immune function.

Sports massage is designed specifically for people involved in athletic activities. Engaging in intense sports is harsh on the body and can often lead to discomfort or pain – and in more serious cases – injuries both short- and long-term.

Ultimate Frisbee is a fast-paced game that involves sprinting, stopping quickly, making sharp changes of



direction and jumping high while keeping a forward momentum. All of these elements put the lower-body joints – particularly knees and ankles – at risk. The most common injuries I see tend to be muscle-related, such as tight quads or hip flexors from running, or tight back and shoulders from throwing. But I also see more serious injuries: sprained ankles, twisted knees, impact injuries and lots of bruising.

There are lots of different techniques I use! I tailor the treatment to each person: manipulation (quick rotational movement or applying direct force), mobilisation (slower and more controlled stretching movements), medical acupuncture and electrotherapy.

When injuries are already present, I do my best to get rid of them. But the key thing I always want to aim for is prevention! This should start way before the Ultimate season begins.

Rest

This is one of the most important elements of injury prevention which, sadly, many players tend to ignore. Proper rest includes relaxing,

stretching and eating healthy food, as well as manual treatment. All of these things focus the body into doing one thing: repairing itself.

Conditioning

Don't wait until your first practice back to start thinking about conditioning! Going to the gym with a specific programme, written by somebody who understands the sport of Ultimate and its demand, will drastically change your body's ability to perform. You can also improve your conditioning by doing strength and agility drills which work your leg and core muscles, as well as the tendons in your body.

There is little chance you will achieve your full potential if you do not prepare your body. This means making it stronger and increasing its ability to twist, turn and change speeds... all the necessary movements required in Ultimate!

Manual treatment

If a muscle (or muscle group) that is necessary to a specific motion is tight, there is a good chance that it will not only restrict the motion, but

also force other muscles to work harder to compensate. This creates imbalances and compensation patterns throughout specific joints and sometimes the whole body.

Just like you see your dentist regularly even if you don't have a toothache, you shouldn't wait for pain to see a sports therapist. Regular treatment will improve your performance, reduce muscle soreness, break down scar tissue and help prevent injuries. Making time to see a manual therapist is something that all elite Ultimate players should consider.

Loic Lefevre

Loic Lefevre is a Sports Therapist, who has worked with several amateur and professional athletes, including New Zealand rugby players, GB bobsledders, Tour de France winners and former UFC fighters, as well as number Ultimate Frisbee players.

For more information about sports therapy, visit my website:

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Skills Clinics

UKU Coaching Programme

The UKU Level 1 coaching course is one of the few places right now where people who don't know a lot about the basics of the sport can come to learn how to improve as a player. But the course is aimed at improving coaching ability, rather than playing ability. If people want to get guidance or coaching as players, then they are dependent upon irregular coaching events that are run by local clubs. These can be a great resource – and club-run skills sessions are vital to overall development – but we are also seeing the demand for even more information.

Most people are probably aware of the Elite Skills Clinics that have been running in the UK since 2010. So far, each has featured different content,

and all have been held in the Midlands.

For 2015, the UKU is aiming to deliver a more repeatable set of skills-based training modules. The idea is that they will provide specific information on various aspects of ultimate such as throwing, cutting or defence. All sessions will be delivered by experienced coaches and/or current or former GB-level players.

The courses will be aimed at beginners and intermediate level players who want to get some guidance on how top teams train, what drills can be run to improve key aspects of their game, and get feedback on how they play.

In 2015, it is our aim to run six one-day events across the country, where each

day consists of two self-contained three-hour lessons. These lessons will have a consistent programme over the next few years; this means that people can select exactly which event to attend based on the course contents and build up their knowledge base.

For 2015, we intend to run the following courses:

- Defensive fundamentals & Handler resets
- Throwing fundamentals & Handler resets
- Cutting fundamentals & Defensive fundamentals
- Vertical stack & Horizontal stack

- Throwing fundamentals & Vertical stack
- Cutting fundamentals & Horizontal stack

Dates & Locations will be announced on

Interested in hosting an event? Please get in touch!

The annual Elite Skills Clinic will also run in September 2015, and will aim to introduce more advanced concepts, and aimed at intermediate/advanced level players. For more information, contact

Sion "Brummie" Scone, Liam Kelly and Si Hill



Champions

are made when no one is watching



Ben Funk

Clapham v Revolver WUCC © Neil Gardner 2014 ultiphotos.com

Friday night in Frankfurt EUCF 2012. Making quarters after an unimpressive day's play, Clapham Ultimate hadn't won a European Championship since 2007 – a very long five years. To win, CU had to go through the top two Swiss teams (who had both beaten Clapham at this event over the past two seasons), plus a Chevron team just barely scraped past in the group stage earlier that day. To some, it was probably beginning to seem like the same disappointment was in store for the bullfrogs. However, for the players in the CU hotel that night, it didn't seem the same at all...

Over the next two days, Freespeed and FAB were swept aside by a defensive display of disciplined ferocity

unmatched to that point, whilst a new resilience shown by the offence against Chevron's pressure D in a close fought final saw the Londoners through to gold.

Now fast forward to 2014, an overcast and chilly Sunday back in Frankfurt where this journey started. CU haven't lost a competitive game to any team in the world hailing from outside of the US in over two years. This team has just made history in the Open division becoming the first team to perform the European "three-peat" and earlier in the year had the best performance at WUCC by a UK team since the tournament's inception in 1989 – including an unprecedented win over Japan's Buzz Bullets and a second victory over Canada's Furious

George this season. The only loss of the tournament came in sudden death to the world number 1 (Revolver).

Reflecting on this season the last few years has left me thinking, "What made this dramatic turn-around in Frankfurt possible? What kept us pushing forward from here to finally breakthrough and become, as Ultiworld put it, 'an elite contender on the global stage'?"

Well, who better to ask than some of the guys that I shared this incredible time with?

Speaking of the turning point, Phil Johnson (#13) said, "The **crux point that started the journey was the painfully close loss to FAB in Bruges 2011. It was the fire to overturn that**

defeat, by outworking everyone else that drove us through 2012. That momentum kept building and didn't let up. It pushed us past the point where dominating Europe was the goal and sights were set significantly higher."

That was evident at CU's weekend trainings between Nationals and Europeans in 2012. Much of the squad were coming off the back of a 'seemingly never-ending' two-year GB cycle. A loss of motivation was something the club has suffered with at this point in the season in previous years. Not so in 2012. High attendance and a mantra that these sessions would be "the best game in Europe" saw the intensity of these session reach a level rarely witnessed outside of tournament play.



2013, and suddenly the best game in Europe wasn't good enough anymore – now it was “best game in the world”. So the focus shifted across the pond, to Chesapeake. CU flew to Washington D.C. to take on the best teams the East coast had to offer, beating the likes of Chain Lightning and Ring of Fire.

In previous years, second half play against US teams often saw UK teams start in contention but fade away as the opposition adjusted tactically and demonstrated their athleticism. But this time was different.

“We were not athletically outmatched in any games as a team,” Tom “Mum” Abrams (#32). “Clapham used to lose these games.”

Not anymore. The ability of this D-line to use the understanding they had forged together to fine-tune as seven guys in unison on pitch whilst keeping pace physically with the opposition proved the difference, taking out Chain and Ring deep into games.

In 2014, CU invested in weeknight training sessions at a North London

3G facility, which allowed training to continue no matter what the unpredictable British weather could hurl at us.

“How great those trainings were, they laid the foundations for recapping on 2012 consolidating our learning,” said former D-line captain Ollie “OB” Benjamin (#78). “The right mix of experience, youth and strategy all backed with hard week-in, week-out graft.”

Newly appointed D-line captain Max McCartney agreed that weeknight training “was superb this year, I really think it was the difference, quality and attendance of training.”

This set Clapham up for success in Lecco. According to Ollie, “Watching the team work and flow as seven players was great. And it wasn't just the same seven. Every point new, fresh players came on and picked up where the previous line left. We were fluid. It gave me real belief which carried us to that revolver game where could stand and like Beau [Kittredge, Revolver] said ‘get hit and hit and hit’. We didn't

fall. And almost delivered our own left hook.”

At 14-15, It was a crushing loss to Revolver. Chris “Bakey” Baker (#77) said, “Even though we lost, we ‘knew’ after that game that we were one of the best in the world, the bar was raised.”

Telling yourselves that something can be achieved is easy, but truly knowing this as a squad is only possible when you've been there with the same guys week after week in the freezing cold and blazing heat beating the crap out of each other to prove it to one another.

“The work ethic is great. People want to learn, to improve,” said Rob “Schuie” Schumacher. Rob reflected that despite the disappointment in Lecco, “every player has a ‘bucket list’. I'm not sure how many people's bucket lists included playing against Buzz Bullets and Furious George, let alone beating them. That was huge!”

There were clearly many factors at play. Entering Tour as separate

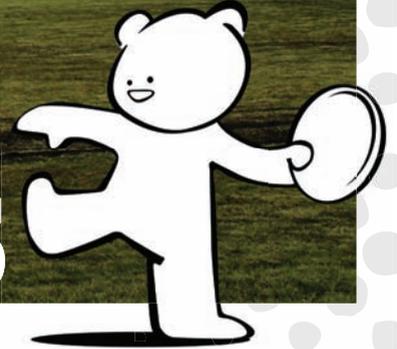
lines (“Clapham O” and “Clapham D”) allowed each line to gel and form unique identities. Low player turnover meaning a core of talent and knowledge was present to build on. And let's not forget post-training meals at a certain Portuguese chicken restaurant gave the team our much needed protein. But the reaction of the squad at this year's AGM showed an overwhelming uniformity of opinion: that training hard together as a team had the single biggest impact. It has been said that “Champions are made when no one is watching,” and never have I believed it more than over the last few years as part of this team.

I'll end on this thought from Cian O'Morain (#6), who has been an integral part of CU's success on and off the pitch. When asked for thoughts on what the difference has been in recent years he responded with a single line email, “Just tell everyone we got better because we got more than 20 guys to training twice a week for a year and a half...”

Dave “Thrash” Stobbs, Clapham #23



Cash for Bristols



In September 2013 Nice Bristols qualified for the World Ultimate Club Championships (WUCC) for the first time in our club's history. As a team that prides itself on developing new players, we were adamant that we would get every player to Italy, via a European warm-up tournament, regardless of their financial situation. In order to do so, preferably with some shiny new stash, we knew we had to raise some serious dolla.

Fairly early on in proceedings, a time of schedules packed with gym sessions, shuttles, sweaty yoga and training, our plan of taking the squad to Windmill Windup was foiled; it turned out all the other World squads also wanted to go to there. Huh!

We weren't able to find any other suitable European tournaments and so after a lot of discussion, we eventually decided we had no option but to attend the Boston Invite! Then

we knew we had to raise a lorra lorra dorra.

So, what's the best way for a group of 24 women to raise a heap of cash in a short space of time? Easy. CAR WASH! We raised £6,000 in an hour and called it a day.

Just kidding, we didn't do that!

Or did we?

No.

This is how we actually raised the money:

- Damme Slamme tournament: **£200** kindly contributed by Tom Styles (thanks to Jenna Thompson for organising)
- Pub quiz and raffle: **£100** (thanks to Georgie and Mark Davin for bidding on the brace of pheasants)
- 5 cake sales: **£600**

- Indiegogo crowd fundraising page: **£3,000** (with generous contributions from friends, families and fellow members of the Ultimate community)
- Raffles: **£200** with prizes kindly contributed by Pie Minister, Bristol Beer Factory, Team Bath and many others
- Sponsorship deal with Aeolus Power: **£1,500**
- Good deeds (litter picking, etc.) **£300**
- easyfundraising.org.uk: **£300**

So that's how we raised what apparently is the highest amount by a UK team so far. Boom!

WUCC logo by Matteo Ercoli

UK Teams at World Ultimate Club Championships

Open

5th Clapham
15th EMO
17th Chevron

Women's

11th Icen
22nd Nice Bristols

Mixed

6th Cambridge Ultimate
12th Bear Cavalry
28th RGS
37th Black Eagles

Masters

7th Zimmer
12th BAF



Megan Cumberidge

Nice Bristols v U de Cologne WUCC © Jeff Bell 2014 ultiphotos.com

Fundraising tips

Get a crowd-funding page

I think part of the reason this worked so well for us [perhaps better than it did for the 2013 GB World Games team, for example] is because it was our first Worlds tournament and a lot of the players, including myself, hadn't played at such a high level before. Therefore we had a lot of friends and relatives who hadn't been tapped up for cash in the past. Thanks, Mum and Dad!

But the main reason was our dogged and relentless self-promotion. I'm sure any of you who are linked to Nice Bristols in any way on social media will testify to that! We had a team that constantly cultivated our internet presence, tweeting squad profiles, blogging about our exploits, writing and sharing daily Facebook posts, always with the Indiegogo link in full view. Annoying but effective.

Get on the telly

Another advantage of this being our first trip to Worlds was that we had a story to sell: "Local women's Frisbee team qualify for World Championships for first time but need funding to get there". Everyone loves an underdog!

There was an article about us in the Bristol Post. Then we had radio interviews with Heart, Jack and BBC Bristol, and we also branched out and got ourselves onto BBC Radio 2's Friday Fixture with Simon Mayo. However, our biggest PR achievement was bagging ourselves a spot on BBC's The One Show (thanks again to Mum)! We knew getting on national television was kind of a big deal, as UKU CEO Si Hill got in touch to tell us not to say anything embarrassing and ruin the sport for everyone in the UK. I think we just about got away with it, although Ruby Wax tried her best to sabotage us...

As far as we know we didn't get any contributions from strangers as a result of these appearances, but I'm fairly sure they helped get the attention of more distant relatives, old friends and the wider Ultimate community. I am confident that we wouldn't have reached our Indiegogo target without such a comprehensive infiltration of the media!

Sharing's caring

We had a dedicated team of three who coordinated the fundraising efforts, scavenged raffle prizes and harassed the local press. In addition to these roles, we had contributions from the entire squad and the wholehearted support of Bristol Ultimate. We set ourselves a target of £5,000 as a team, to ensure that everyone could financially commit to our "Road to Worlds". Because it was a team goal, everyone got involved and it slowly became apparent that we might actually reach it, which we did, and then surpassed it by £1,000!

We have so many people to thank, as their contributions to our fundraising page and other projects enabled all of us to attend our biggest ever tournament, and ensured we had an incredible year. Thank you!

Emily Arnold, Nice Bristols #96

"All the women's skills sessions have been good training sessions. The skills covered are good – they are useful to practise and well taught. Sometimes you learn new things, and sometimes you get focused practice on things you already know. The games at the end are great!"

Sarah Hartley

"It's amazing to see so many women out and who aren't from the usual London clubs, which shows how much the women scene in London Ultimate has grown. I also love the opportunity of being able to meet with other women who play in London as we don't always get to meet the women from the other clubs."

Minfeng "Jackson" Tan

"It's wonderful to experience the camaraderie between teammates and opponents, it makes me feel like there really is a nice Women's Ultimate community in London that's invested in helping each other grow in order to raise the overall level of Women's Ultimate in London."

Marie Sennyey

"I have been very impressed with the continued energy that has been invested into the UK Women's Ultimate scene. There are, as ever, unsung heroes whose hours of dedication provide a seamless movement onwards and upwards for UK Ultimate. Thank you to all you legends!"

Alia Ayub



Knott Shore

Manchester v JR Tour 1 © Andy Moss 2014



Francesca Scarampi

Em Woodwark

Iceni v SYC UK Nationals © Andy Moss 2014



Jools Murray

Manchester Tour 1 © Christine Frances 2014 rushworthphotography.co.uk

Iceni's Women's clinic in Madrid

Last November, four Iceni players – Sonia Komenda, Ange Wilkinson, Fiona Kwan and Alex Benedict – went out to Madrid to run a women's skills clinic.

We had two days and were invited to teach any aspect of Ultimate to a huge group of female players in Spain. There were players from all over Spain, including people who took flights to attend!

It was an intense two days, with eight hours on the pitch, followed by dinner and a classroom session. It didn't feel very long, though! We wanted to use every moment to the fullest potential.

We were covering lots of the basics: cutting, throwing, offense, defence, pulling and hucking, with lots of game time, as well. Two full days of training goes by very quickly!

Alex speaks Spanish very well, so she did the explanations to the group. Fiona and I speak some Spanish, so we could do individual tutoring. All the girls were very patient with us when we got something wrong or didn't know the right word for something!

It was an incredible experience. We were amazed at how dedicated everyone was to learning! People were so receptive to feedback and willing



Rupal Ghelani

to try new things. Also, on Sunday morning, the session was starting at 10am. But people started showing up at 9am so they could ask us even more questions! The questions ranged from whether we thought horizontal or vertical stack was better, to how to recruit more women players.

It was a mixed level, from team captains to beginners who had been playing for two months. No matter the level, everyone was so keen! Within those two days, you could see huge improvements. People integrated the skills from our drills into the scrimmages right away. In particular,

the biggest improvement was on D and taking away the under cuts.

It's great to see women's teams developing all over Europe, and to see all the skills clinics being run. Elite teams often focus on the competitive side of things, but it's just as important to look at how we can give back to the community.

As Iceni player Caroline "The Queen" Nicholls likes to say, "We're interested in growing the sport for everyone, not just our team."

Sonia Komenda, Iceni #15





Adrian Delport

Alex Nicholson

It's never too early to trial

Vision v Emo Tour 3 © Christine Frances 2014 rushworthphotography.co.uk

I've been playing Ultimate for six years now. In that time I have competed at the lowest level of C Tour as well as the lower end of A Tour. I know that to many this highlights that I've not played the very best this country, let alone other countries, has to offer. However, I'm very much at the start of my Ultimate career.

Going on the exploits of other players, it's probably fair to say that to make it to a sixth year without being chronically injured in some way is a feat in itself. It may even be appropriate to consider my Ultimate career as not starting, but rather 'maturing'. I have a lot of respect for everyone in our community, especially those that play regardless of age or athletic ability. The bottom line is that we all play for our own reasons, culminating in an infectious love of the sport. What I'm getting at is that in my opinion, my career is just starting and that's what matters to me.

However, I have a huge regret – why

is it only starting now? This year was the first year that I trialled for a club team. My prior experience was playing at university, then with friends, then with a local club team, who, due to a shortage of numbers, would take pretty much anyone. This is likely the same story for a lot of Ultimate players – especially those who weren't athletically gifted at school. Personally, I didn't trial for anyone for the last few years because I didn't feel fit enough, my disc skills were lacking, I wasn't aggressive enough, and to a degree, I didn't know enough people.

This all came to a head when the call for GB U23 came out in 2012. I asked to be spotted and the only notification I got back was that I wasn't successful. I'm sure that the organisers can't spot everyone or provide individual feedback, and I have no idea if they even knew who I was. This is not a complaint. I had only played Tour with a low B Tour side and most of my experience was in the university

circuit. However, a friend in a similar position was invited to trials after contacting the organisers directly. My confidence had taken a hit, but, if I wanted it that much why hadn't I just pushed for a better response, too? Essentially, I was intimidated by the whole thing. Which meant I let an amazing opportunity pass me by.

When I finally went to trials for my club this year, I could never have felt more out of my depth. I was always off my mark, my throws were wild, my cutting was atrocious and I felt like a beginner all over again. But despite of that, I was selected. The captains gave me things to work on and cited my work ethic as the reason to have me on the squad – "just keep working" was the advice. As a result I had the best tour season I've ever had (and that's not saying we won all our games).

So, despite six years of playing Ultimate, I've only had one year which I would count as part of my Ultimate career. I was selected by

a better team because I put myself in a uncomfortable position, and then worked as hard as I could and demonstrated what I could bring to the squad. I think I could have been playing on for this team for a few years now. I could have spent fewer years in C Tour, when I wanted to be playing A Tour. At the very least I'd have had better training experiences and been told, candidly, what I needed to improve to become a better player. All of which is invaluable.

The fundamental point that I am trying to get across is that no matter what stage you are in your Ultimate career, if you want to improve, if you want to get better, if you want to compete to the best of your ability, do not be intimidated. Put your name forwards, get out there, talk to people and get noticed. The work you put in will pay dividends in the long run. Don't waste your time.

It's never too early to trial.

Jonathan Falshaw, LLL Leeds #90

On trial

So you've decided to try out for an Ultimate team. Maybe it's for one of the GB squads, or maybe it's for a local team. Exciting! Now what?

As the number of Ultimate players is ever-increasing, it may not be feasible or practical for coaches or captains to trial every interested player. Many teams have online applications with questions to fill out. Not everyone will be invited to the actual trials. How do you make sure you're given a chance to show what you've got on the pitch?

There are also numerous teams (club and country) that invite everyone who applies to trial. Many of these teams still use written applications in the first instance to help get an idea of the different types of players trying out, and allow them to balance teams in a trial session and see what split there is within handlers and cutters, and so on.

Here's some advice from GB captains and managers on getting past that first stage of applications!

Don't cut yourself before you turn up

Jon Pugh, the coach for GB U23 Women, says he has this exchange with at least three players every year:

"Why didn't you come to trials?"

"I didn't think I'd get in."

Trials are an opportunity to learn and challenge yourself, whether or not you make the team. Jon likes to encourage all the players that attend U23 trials to trial for their local clubs and make sure they get on a Tour team.

"Most people have much better odds of getting onto a GB team than, say, winning the lottery, but they still buy a ticket!" Jon says.

Don't wait to be tapped up

Captains want to see players who are keen to play, which means you need to show a bit of initiative. "Don't wait to be asked – or worse, get grumpy about not being asked," says Rob

McGowan, Manager of GB Masters. "Playing for GB is a privilege and should be treated as such. A big part of selection is enthusiasm for the role. The best way to demonstrate that in the early phases is to reach out to those running the team and asked to be included in plans."

Captains and managers are pretty busy people, and may not know you're eligible, or may not have your email address. Help them out by putting yourself forwards.

Own your strengths...

There is a time and place for modesty, but not when applying for an elite team. The section for describing your strengths is about highlighting what you feel you can bring both on and off pitch, says Katharine "KJ"

Boardman-Hims, Manager of GB Women's Masters. "Don't think of it as boasting but demonstrating what your contribution could be to the team as a whole." Off-pitch contributions such as sideline, work ethic and commitment to the team can be just as important as your skills and raw ability.

But be honest about your weaknesses!

If the application form asks you what your weaknesses are, "don't say 'I have no weaknesses'," says Jenna Thompson, GB Women's Manager. "Everyone has issues that need work. Putting down your weaknesses shows you're aware of what you can improve and your willingness to learn. It's important that people put themselves forward and see trials as a challenge

and a fantastic opportunity to learn and improve their Ultimate."

Show a willingness to learn

A trial isn't just an opportunity to demonstrate your ability. It's also an opportunity to learn. This is true even if you've played for a GB squad in the past. Showing a willingness to learn says a lot about attitude.

"The best trialists are those who show an eagerness to fit into a system, as opposed to trying to highlighting their individual strengths," says Justin Foord, GB Open. "Show a willingness to learn and take on board feedback, and selectors will favour you over a superstar who doesn't listen."

Good luck!

Mara Alperin



Matt Metcalfe

Fred Shone

Clap is on the map

Fear the frog

At this year's World Ultimate Club Championship (WUCC), Clapham have put not only themselves but the UK's Ultimate pedigree firmly on the map. Clapham are the epitome of the good things we are doing in elite UK Ultimate at present, with weekly local trainings featuring committed and athletic players working hard to be the best in the world. They are the pinnacle of Ultimate in the UK and in Europe and from an outside perspective they deserve it.

Speaking of perspective, it's probably easy for an outsider to skim over the fact that Clapham are in fact not the only team in the UK. However, let's think objectively. Our best Open and Women's teams? London. Our GB World Games team? London. Biggest playing population? London. Controversially to some, depending on where you sit on the argument, our Open team is entirely based in London (if not personnel, then infrastructure). Of course, London is a global city with pulling power untold compared to the rest of the UK, but is power being consolidated too much within the M25?

Speak it quietly, but other regions might just be coming to the fore.

I've written for The Show Game (□□□□□□□□□□) about the state of Ultimate in the UK and how we appeared to be moving towards a London dominated sport and how the North (my region) is suffering. The cynics among us might just think this is closer to the truth in 2015 than before. However, as the UK recovers economically, are we starting to see the seeds of recovery?

In 2013 the highest ranking Northern team was Manchester Ultimate who ended Tour ranked 11th and Nationals 8th. LLeeds closely followed in 13th but the next best were The Brown at 20th, Vision at 26th and Saints at 30th. 5 teams in the top 30, compared



David Pryce

Sheffield Hat © Christine Frances 2014 rushworthphotography.co.uk

to London's 9, and with an average ranking of #20 compared to London's #15. Draw what conclusions you may from this, but clearly London teams are featuring on average higher up the ranks.

I would have liked 2014 to show some progress but in fact the anomalous result was Manchester who increased their overall rank to 8th (and started Nationals as the #6 seed) whilst LLeeds dropped to 16th, Vision to 28th and The Brown to 29th. The Saints dropped to 54th (only entering one Tour) so my top 30 sample now has again an average rank of #20 but with a smaller sample, where London actually dropped to #16 but

for consistency I haven't included Clapham D who only played 2 events - if included, that rank stays at #15.

On reflection, it feels like I'm shooting myself in the foot from my original statement. However, statistics and finishes at Tour don't tell you everything.

On the Open side Liverpool, Manchester and Leeds have all attracted or finally acquired top level talent to help the cities develop a scene - Liam Kelly (GB Open 2012) has committed to Vision after several years with Chevron, whilst similarly James 'Jacko' Jackson (GB Open 2011) has gone over to Manchester to help their push towards the top.

Finally, Leeds are building on a few years of promoting local regular Ultimate and are surely reaping the rewards of Sion "Brummie" Scone's recent move to Yorkshire. All three teams have enjoyed competitive intake and recruitment, working with their local universities to finally develop a stable production line of talent into the teams. All three teams have in the past lost top tier talent to Chevron (who for the sake of this article I am not classifying as a true Northern team due to their wide player base), and whilst Chevron retain a portion of Northern based players it appears in 2015 that their net has spread further allowing for hopefully more security for these three cities.



Hamish Rankine

Nick Smith



The important long-term question is how do we compete with Clapham? It cannot be healthy for one team to dominate so overwhelmingly, and I'm sure Clapham would like to not have to rack up the air miles so extensively to improve. The following points aren't an exhaustive guide, but I feel they are a strong starting point for any city looking to improve.

1. Players committing to their local area and developing a production line is critical. In years gone by Liverpool, Manchester and Leeds had no real strategy as a city – all three have now secured top-tier players who are helping shape the direction of Ultimate in their city, and new players know what options are available to them and how to access them.

2. Creating a "destination Ultimate programme" for your city is vital. Players will choose cities based on their Ultimate – accepting that this is a lifestyle sport and developing your city to provide recreational, competitive and "elite" options is very underrated. One team cannot fit all.

3. Communication is critical. We've all been at one point or another just another player who didn't know how the community works. That player could be the next Justin Foord or Beau Kittredge if they are able to understand how they play and where suits them best. Websites, social media, forums, whatever formats are available to you – use them, and use them regularly.

4. Identify your team's coaches and get them through the UKU L1 and L2 qualifications. Coaching isn't something that naturally happens, it's an entire discipline in itself. Coaches don't guarantee the best players, but they give us more chance than winging it.

Generating a world class ultimate programme with a consistent production line and contemporary tactics isn't an overnight job. Congratulations to Clapham for achieving it, but let's not pat them on the back for too long.

Dale Walker



Ultimatum2014



Ben Parsons



Nathan Trickey